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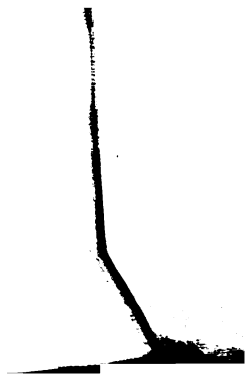
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Hamlet
Act 1. Scene 5.

THE
P L A Y S
OF
WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE,
ACCURATELY PRINTED FROM
THE TEXT OF MR. STEEVENS'S
LAST EDITION,
WITH
A S E L E C T I O N
OF
THE MOST IMPORTANT NOTES.

VOLUME XVII.

CONTAINING
HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

LEIPSICK:

PRINTED FOR GERHARD FLEISCHER THE YOUNGER.

1 8 1 1.



H A M L E T.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Claudius, *King of Denmark.*

Hamlet, *son to the former, and nephew to the present, King.*

Polonius, *Lord Chamberlain.*

Horatio, *friend to Hamlet.*

Laertes, *son to Polonius,*

Voltimand,

Coruelius,

Rosencrantz,

Guildestern,

} *Courtiers.*

Osrick, *a courtier.*

Another courtier.

A priest.

Marcellus,

Bernardo,

} *Officers.*

Francisco, *a soldier.*

Reynaldo, *servant to Polonius.*

A Captain. An Ambassador.

Ghost of Hamlet's father.

Fortinbras, *Prince of Norway.*

Gertrude, *Queen of Denmark, and mother of Hamlet.*

Ophelia, *daughter of Polonius.*

*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players
Gravediggers; Sailors, Messengers, and
other Attendants.*

SCENE, *Elsinore.*

H A M L E T,
PRINCE OF DENMARK.

ACT I. SCENE I.

sinore. A Platform before the Castle.

FRANCISCO on his post. Enter to him

BERNARDO.

Who's there?

m. Nay, answer me: stand and unfold
elf.

Long live the King!

m. Bernardo?

He.

m. You come most carefully upon your
hour.

'Tis now struck twelve: get thee to bed;
Francisco.

m. For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter
cold,

am sick at heart.

Have you had quiet guard?

H A M L E T,

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think, I hear them. — Stand, h
Who is there?

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:

Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night. [Exit FRANCIS]

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,

What, is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good
cellus.

Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again
night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy;
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of u
Therefore I have entreated him along,
With us to watch the minutes of this night
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and speak to it

Hor. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile;

And let us once again assail your ears.
That are so fortified against our story.

What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one, —

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it
comes again!

Enter GHOST.

Ber. In the same figure, like the King that's
dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the King? mark it,
Horatio.

Hor. Most like: — it harrows me with fear,
and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of
night,

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the Majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee,
speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak; speak I charge thee, speak.
[*Exit Ghost.*]

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble, and
look pale:

*Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you of it?*

H A M L E T,

Hor. Before my God, I might not thi
lieve,

Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the King?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on,
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry pa
He smote the fledged Polack on the ice.
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump a
dead hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our wate

Hor. In what particular thought to we
know not;

But, in the gross and scope of mine opinion
This bodes some strange eruption to our sta

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell r
that knows,

Why this same strict and most observant v
So nightly toils the subject of the land;
And why such daily cast of brazen canno
And foreign mart for implements of war
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose
Does not divide the sunday from the wee
What might be toward, that this sweaty
Doth make the night joint-labourer wi
Who is't, that can inform me?

Hor. That can I;

At least the whisper goes so. Our las
Whose image even but now appear'd

Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of

Thereto prick'd on by a most emula

Dar'd to the combat; in which, our

(Forso this side of our known world

Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,

Well ratified by law, and heraldry,
 Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,
 Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror:
 Against the which, a moiety competent
 Was gaged by our King; which had return'd
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
 Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same contract,

And carriage of the article design'd,
 His fell to Hamlet: Now, Sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
 Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
 Shark'd up a list of landless resolute,
 For food and diet, to some enterprize
 That hath a stomach in't: which is no other
 (As it doth well appear unto our state,) . . .
 But to recover of us, by strong hand,
 And terms compulsory, those foresaid lands
 So by his father lost: And this, I take it,
 Is the main motive of our preparations;
 The source of this our watch; and the chief head
 Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

[*Ber.* I think, it be no other, but even so:
 Well may it sort, that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch; so like the King
 That was, and is, the question of these wars.

[*Hor.* A mote it is, to trouble the mind's eye,
 In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
 The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

*As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
 Disasters in the sun; and the moist star,*

Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
 And even the like precursor of fierce events, —
 As harbingers preceding still the fates,
 And prologue to the omen coming on, —
 Have heaven and earth together démonstrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen. —]

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes again!
 I'll cross it, though it blast me. — Stay, illusion!
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
 Speak to me:

If there be any good thing to be done,
 That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
 Speak to me:

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
 Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
 O, speak!

Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
 Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
 [Cock crows;

Speak of it: — stay, and speak. — Stop it, Mar-
 cellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partizan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber. 'Tis here!

Hor. 'Tis here!

Mar. 'Tis gone! [Exit Ghost.

We do it wrong, being so majestic,
 To offer it the show of violence;
 For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
 And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak when the cock cre

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17. And then it started, like a guilty thing
 a fearful summons. I have heard,
 cock; that is the trumpet to the morn,
 with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
 ke the God of day; and, at his warning,
 ther in sea or fire, in earth or air,
 extravagant and erring spirit hies
 is confine: and of the truth herein
 present object made probation.

17. It faded on the crowing of the cock;
 e say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
 rein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 bird of dawning singeth all night long:
 then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;
 nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
 ury takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
 allow'd and so gracious is the time.

17. So have I heard, and do in part be-
 lieve it.

look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
 s o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill:
 t we our watch up; and, by my advice,
 is impart what we have seen to-night
 young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
 spirit dumb to us, will speak to him:
 ou consent we shall acquaint him with it,
 eedful in our loves, fitting our duty?

17. Let's do't, I pray: and I this morning
 know

re we shall find him most convenient.

[*Exeunt.*

H A M L E T,

S C E N E II.

The same. A Room of State in the same.

*Enter the King, Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS
LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords,
and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death

The memory be green; and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;

Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.

Therefore our sometime sister, now our Queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy, —
With one auspicious, and one dropping eye;
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight and dole —,
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along: — For all, our thanks.

Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras, —

Holding a weak supposal of our worth;
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagu'd with this dream of his advantage,

*He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
To our most valiant brother. — So much for him*

Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
 Thus much the business is: We have here writ
 To Nørway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
 Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
 His further gait herein; in that the levies,
 The lists, and full proportions, are all made
 Out of his subject:—and we here despatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand;
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
 Giving to you no further personal power
 To business with the King, more than the scope
 Of these dilated articles allow.

Farewell; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. Vol. In that, and all things, will we show
 our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.*]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
 You told us of some suit; What is't, Laertes?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Daue,
 And lose your voice: What would'st thou beg,

Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
 The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What would'st thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread Lord,

Your leave and favour to return to France;
 From whence though willingly I came to Den-
 mark,

To show my duty in your coronation;

Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,

My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France;
 And how them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What
says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my Lord, [wrung from me my
slow leave,

By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:]
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be
thine,

And thy best graces: spend it at thy will.

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son, —

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than
kind. [*Aside.*

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on
you?

Ham. Not so, my Lord, I am too much i'the
sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not, for ever, with thy veiled lids

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:

Thou know'st, 'tis common; all, that live, must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, Madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not
seems.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,

Nor the dejected bayour of the visage,

Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,

That can denote me truly: These, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:

But I have that within, which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your
nature, Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:
But you must know, your father lost a father:
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation, for some term

To do obsequious sorrow: But to perséver

In obstinate condolément, is a course

Of impious stubbornness, 'tis unmanly grief:

It shows a will most incorrect to heaven;

A heart unfortified, or mind impatient;

An understanding simple and unschool'd:

For what, we know, must be, and is as common

As any the most vulgar thing to sense,

Why should we, in our peevish opposition,

Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,

A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,

To reason most absurd; whose common theme

Is death of fathers, and who still hath cry'd,

From the first corse, till he that died to-day,

This must be so. We pray you throw to earth

This unprevailing woe; and think of us

As of a father: for let the world take note,

You are the most immediate to our throne;

And, with no less nobility of love,

Than that which dearest father bears his son

Do I impart toward you. For your intent

In going back to school in Wittenberg.

It is most retrograde to our desire:

And, we beseech you, bend you to remain

Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,

Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son,

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet;

I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, Madam

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply;
Be as ourself in Denmark. — Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,
No jocund health, that Denmark drinks to-day;
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell;
And the King's rouse the heaven shall bruit again
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt King, Queen, Lords, &c. POLONIUS, and LAERTES.*]

Ham. O, that this too too solid 'flesh would
melt,

Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!

Or that the everlasting had not fix'd

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable

Seem to me all the uses of this world!

Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,

That grows to seed; things rank, and gross in na-
ture,

Possess it merely. That it should come to this!

But two months dead! — nay, not so much, not
two:

So excellent a King; that was, to this,

Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother;

That he might not beteem the winds of heaven

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!

Must I remember? why, she would hang on him

As if increase of appetite had grown

By what it fed on: And yet, within a month, —

Let me not think on't; — Frailty, thy name is
woman! —

*A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's bed*

Like Niobe, all tears; — why she, even she, —
O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer, — marry'd with my
uncle,

My father's brother; but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules: Within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She marry'd: — O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
But break, my heart: for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, and MARCELLUS.

Hor. Hail to your Lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well:
Horatio, — or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my Lord, and your poor
servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that
name with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? —
Marcellus?

Mar. My good Lord, —

Ham. I am very glad to see you; good even,
Sir. —

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my Lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it trustor of your own report
Against yourself: I know, you are no truant:
But what is your affair in Elsinore?

Hor. We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Ham. My Lord, I came to see your father's fun-
eral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, for
student;

I think, it was to see my mother's wedding

Hor. Indeed, my Lord, it follow'd hard

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral
meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

'Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio! —

My father, — Methinks, I see my father.

Hor. Where,

My Lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly

Ham. He was a man, take him for all

I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My Lord, I think I saw him yester

Ham. Saw! who?

Hor. My Lord, the King your father.

Ham. The King my father!

Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear; till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentle
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch;
In the dead waist and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your
Armed at point, exactly, cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and, with solemn ma
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he w
By their oppress'd and fear-surprized eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, d
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This

In dreadful secrecy impart they did:
 And I with them, the third night, kept the watch:
 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
 The apparition comes: I knew your father;
 These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My Lord, upon the platform where we
 watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My Lord, I did;

But answer made it none: yet once, methought,
 It lifted up its head, and did address
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak:
 But, even then, the morning cock crew loud;
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
 And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd Lord, 'tis
 true;

And we did think it writ down in our duty,
 To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, Sirs, but this troubles
 me.

Hold you the watch to - night?

All. We do, my Lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

All. Arm'd, my Lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

All. My Lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not

His face.

Hor. O, yes, my Lord: he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more
 'n sorrow than in anger.

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Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would, I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like,

Very like: Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell
a hundred.

Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzl'd? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to - night;
Perhaps 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant, it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to - night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;
I will requite your loves: So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your Honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: Farewell.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

*My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: 'would, the night were
come!*

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Till then sit still, my soul: Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's
eyes. [Exit.

SCENE III.

A Room in Polonius' House,
Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd; farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convey is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his fa-
vour,

Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews, and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
But now no soil, nor cautel, doth besmirch
The virtue of his will: but, you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
He himself is subject to his birth:
May not, as unvalued persons do,
Use for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of the whole state;
Therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd

Unto the voice and yielding of that body;
Whereof he is the head: Then if he says, he l

you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain
If with too credent ear you list his songs;
Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure op
To his unmaster'd importunity.

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then: best safety lies in fear;
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson l
As watchman to my heart: But, good my l
ther,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read.

Laer. O, fear me not,
I stay too long; — But here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;

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asion smiles upon a second leave.

ol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for
shame;

wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
you are staid for; There, — my blessing
with you;

[*Laying his hand on LAERTES' head.*
these few precepts in thy memory
k thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
any unproportion'd thought his act.
hon familiar, but by no means vulgar.
friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
ople them to thy soul with hooks of steel;
do not dull thy palm with entertainment
sch new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
ntrance to a quarrel: but, being in,
it that the opposer may beware of thee.
every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.
y thy habit as thy purse can buy,
not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
the apparel oft proclaims the man;
they in France, of the best rank and station,
most select and generous, chief in that.
er a borrower, nor a lender be:
loan oft loses both itself and friend;
borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
above all, — To thine ownself be true;
it must follow, as the night the day,
canst not then be false to any man.
vell; my blessing season this in thee!
er. Most humbly do I take my leave, my
Lord,

The time invites you; go; your servants
tend.

Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well

What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [Exit LAERTES.

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the
lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bount-
eous;

If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour:
What is between you; give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my Lord, of late made many
tenders

Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? puh! you speak like a green
girl,

Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my Lord, what I should
think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a
baby;

That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more
dearly;

Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wrangling it thus,) you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My Lord, he hath importun'd me with
love,

In honourable fashion.

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Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech,
my Lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do
know,

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a making,
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scantier of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate,
Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, That he is young;
And with a larger tether may he walk,
Than may be given you: In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows: for they are broker's
Not of that die which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
The better to beguile. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.

Oph. I shall obey, my Lord. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

The Platform.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think, it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not; it then drew
near the season,
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance
shot off, within.*]

What does this mean my Lord?

Ham. The King doth wake to-night, and take
his rouse,

Keeps wassel, and the swaggering up-spring reeling;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't:
But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance:
This heavy-headed revel, east and west,
Makes us traduc'd, and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe us, drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and, indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at
height,

The pith and marrow of our attribute.

So, oft it chances in particular men,

That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin,)

By the o'er-growth of some complexion,

Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason

Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leaves

The form of plausible manners;—that these men
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;

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Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,
 Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo,) Shall in the general censure take corruption
 From that particular fault: The dram of base
 Doth all the noble substance often dunt,
 To his own scandal.

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my Lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend
 us! —

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from
 hell,

Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
 Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
 That I will speak to thee; I'll call thee, Hamlet,
 King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me:
 Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,
 Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
 Have burst their cerements! why the sepulchre;
 Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
 To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
 That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
 So horribly to shake our disposition,
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
 Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
 As if it some impartment did desire
 To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action

It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my Lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?

It waves me forth again; — I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood
my Lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er his base into the sea?
And there assume some other horrible form;
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still: —
Go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my Lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve. —

[*Ghost beckon*

Still am I call'd: — unhand me, Gentlemen; —

[*Breaking from them*

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that looks
me: —

I say, away: — Go on, — I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet*

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Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after:—To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E V.

A more remote Part of the Platform.

Re-enter Ghost and Hamlet.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak, I'll
go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hear-
ing

To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What ?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,

I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young
blood;

Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their
spheres;

Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end;

Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:

But this eternal blazon must not be

To ears of flesh and blood:—List, list, O list!—

If thou didst ever thy dear father love, ———

Ham. O heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural
murder.

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know it; that I, with wings
as swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Would'st thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet,
hear

'Tis given out, that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Den-
mark

Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent, that did sting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetick soul! my uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate
beast,

With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,
 (O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
 So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust
 The will of my most seeming-virtuous Queen:
 O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
 From me, whose love was of that dignity,
 That it went hand in hand even with the vow
 I made to her in marriage: and to decline
 Upon a wretch, whose naturel gifts were poor
 To those of mine!

But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
 Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven;
 So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
 Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
 And prey on garbage.

But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air;
 Brief let me be:—Sleeping within mine orchard,
 My custom always of the afternoon,
 Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
 With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
 And in the porches of mine ears did pour
 The leperous distilment; whose effect
 Hold such an enmity with blood of man,
 That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
 The natural gates and alleys of the body;
 And, with a sudden vigour, it doth posset
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
 The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
 Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
 All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
 Of live, of crown, of Queen, at once despatch'd:
*Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
 Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd:
 ,reckoning-made, but sent to my account*

With all my imperfections on my head:
 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.
 But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire:
 Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [Exit.

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth!
 What else?

And shall I couple hell?—O fie!—Hold, hold,
 my heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee?

Yea, from the table of my memory
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
 That youth and observation copied there;
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven—
 O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
 My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain
 At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark:

[Writing

*So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
 It is, Adieu, adieu! remember me.*

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I have sworn't.

Hor. [*Within.*] My Lord, my Lord, —

Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet, —

Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Mar. [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my Lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS

Mar. How is't, my noble Lord?

Hor. What news, my Lord?

Ham. O, wonderful!

Hor. Good my Lord, tell it.

Ham. No;

You will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my Lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my Lord.

Ham. How say you then; would heart of man
once think it? —

But you'll be secret, —

Hor. Mar. Ay, by heaven, my Lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all
Denmark.

But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my Lord, come
from the grave,

To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;

And so, without more circumstance at all,

I hold it fit, that we shake hands, and part:

You, as your business, and desire,

Such as it is, — and, for my own poor part,
Look you, I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words,
my Lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily; yes
Faith, heartily.

Hor. 'There's no offence, my Lord.

Ham. Yes, by saint Patrick, but there is, Ho-
ratio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision
here, —

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master it as you may. And now, good
friends,

As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my Lord?
We will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen
to-night.

Hor. Mar. My Lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear't.

Hor. In faith,
My Lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my Lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my Lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou
there, true-penny?
Come on, — you hear this fellow in the cellarage,
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my Lord.

Ham. Never-to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

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Ham. *Hic & ubique?* then we'll shift our ground:—

Come hither, Gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Swear by my sword,
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear by his sword.

Ham. Well said, old mole! can'st work i'the earth so fast?

A worthy pioneer! — Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come; —

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy!

How strange or odd so'er I bear myself,

As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To put an antick disposition on, —

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As, *Well, well, we know*; — or, *We could*;

and if we would; — or, *If we list to speak*; —

or, *There be, an if they might*; —

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me: — This do you swear,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you!

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! — So, Gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you:

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And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
Good willing, shall not lack. Let us go in to-
gether;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite!
That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let's go together.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T II. S C E N E I.

A Room in Polonius's House.

Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO.

Pol. Give him this money, and these notes,
Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my Lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Rey-
naldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My Lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said: very well said. Look
you, Sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where
they keep,
What company, at what expence; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more
nearer

Than your particular demands will touch it:

*Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of
him;*

thus,—I know his father, and his friends,

And, in part, him;—Do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my Lord.

Pol. *And, in part, him;—but, you may say,—not well:*

*But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so;—and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, Sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.*

Rey. As gaming, my Lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,

Drabbing:—You may go so far.

Rey. My Lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.

*You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly,*

*That they may seem the taints of liberty:
The flash and out-break of a fiery mind;
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.*

Rey. But, my good Lord, ——

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my Lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, Sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
*You laying these slight sullies on my son;
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i'the working,
Mark you,*

Your party in converse, him you would sour
 Having ever seen, in the prenominate crimes
 The youth you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd
 He closes with you in this consequence;
Good Sir, or so; or friend, or Gentleman
 According to the phrase, or the addition,
 Of man, and country.

Rey. Very good, my Lord.

Pol. And then, Sir, does he this, — He d
 What was I about to say? — By the mass, I
 about to say something: — Where did I leave

Rey. At closes in the consequence. — *Ay, ma*
 He closes with you thus: — *I know the*
tleman;

I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such;
as you say,

There was he gaming; there o'ertook in
rouse;

There falling out at tennis: or, perchance
I saw him enter such a house of sale,
(Videlicet, a brothel,) or so forth —

See you now;

Your bait of falsehood takes his carp of truth
 And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
 With windlaces, and with assays of bias,
 By indirections find directions out:

So, by my former lecture and advice,
 Shall you my son; You have me, have you

Rey. My Lord, I have.

Pol. God be wi' you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my Lord, —

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my Lord.

Pol. And let him ply his musick.

Rey. Well, my Lord.

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Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. Farewell! — How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?

Oph. O, my Lord, my Lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, in the name of heaven?

Oph. My Lord, as I was sewing in my closet; Lord Hamlet, — with his doublet all unbrac'd; No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd, Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle; Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other; And with a look so piteous in purport, As if he had been loosed out of hell, To speak of horrors, — he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My Lord, I do not know:

Pol. Truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;

Then goes he to the length of all his arm; With his other hand thus o'er his brow, Falls to such perusal of my face, As would draw it. Long stay'd he so. A little shaking of mine arm, Thrice his head thus waving up and down, — 'Tis'd a sigh so piteous and profound, As it did seem to shatter all his bulk, And his being: That done, he lets me go: With his head over his shoulder turn'd, He would find his way without their helps. 'Tis the last, bended their light on me.

Come, go with me; I will go seek the King,

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz:

And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. — Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our
practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and some Attendants.

Enter POLONIUS,

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good
Lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good
news.

Pol. Have I, my Lord? Assure you, my good
Liege,

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious King:
And I do think, (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors:
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring
them in

[*Exit* POLONIUS]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and*
CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall sift him. — Welcome;
my good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings, and desires.

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: Whereat griev'd, —
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand, — sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give the assay of arms against your Majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee;
And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown,

[*Gives a paper.*

That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprize;
On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;
And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read;
later, and think upon this business.

Mean time; we thank you for your well-to
labour:

Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
Most welcome home!

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS]

Pol. This business is well ended.

My Liege, and Madam, to expostulate
What Majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time
Therefore, — since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourish, —

I will be brief: Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it: for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all:
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then: and now remains;
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.

I have a daughter; have, while she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: Now gather, and surmise

— *To the celestial, and my soul's idol,
most beautified Ophelia,*

*That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; beautified
a vile phrase: but you shall hear. — Thus:*

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In her excellent white bosom, these, &c. —

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good Madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful. —

Doubt thou, the stars are fire; [Reads.

Doubt, that the sun doth move:

Doubt truth to be a liar;

But never doubt, I love.

*O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers;
I have not art to reckon my groans: but that
I love thee best, O most best, believe it.
Adieu.*

*Thine evermore, most dear Lady, whilst
this machine is to him, Hamlet.*

*This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me:
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.*

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might
you think,

*When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me,) what might you,
Or my dear Majesty your Queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? no, I went round to
work,*

*And my young mistress thus did I bespeak;
Lord Hamlet is a Prince out of thy sphere;*

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Enter HAMLET, reading.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away; I board him presently: — O, give me leave. —

[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*]
Pol. How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God-'a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my Lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my Lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my Lord?

Ham. Ay, Sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my Lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a God, kissing carrion. — Have you laughter?

Pol. I have, my Lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i'the sun: conception a blessing; but as your daughter may conceive, friend, look to't.

Pol. How say you by that? [*Aside.*] Still rapping on my daughter: — yet he knew me not first: he said I was a fishmonger: He is far gone, far gone: and, truly, in my youth I suffer'd much extremity for love; very near this. I speak to him again. — What do you read, my Lord?

Ham. Words, words, words!

Pol. What is the matter, my Lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my Lord.

Ham. Slanders, Sir: for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have grey beards; that their faces are wrinkled: their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: All which, Sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, Sir, shall be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method in it. [*Aside.*] Will you walk out of the air, my Lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

Pol. Indeed, that is out o'the air.—How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be deliver'd of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My honourable Lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, Sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my Lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. God save you, Sir! [*To POLONIUS*
[*Exit POLONIUS*

Guil. My honour'd Lord!—

- s.* My most dear Lord!—
- m.* My excellent good friends! How dost Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good how do ye both?
- s.* As the indifferent children of the earth.
- il.* Happy, in that we are not overhappy; fortune's cap we are not the very button.
- m.* Nor the soles of her shoe?
- s.* Neither, my Lord.
- m.* Then you live about her waist, or in the eye of her favours?
- il.* 'Faith, her privates we.
- m.* In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true she is a strumpet. What news?
- s.* None, my Lord; but that the world's honest.
- m.* Then is doomsday near: But your news true. [Let me question more in particular: have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison?
- il.* Prison, my Lord!
- m.* Denmark's a prison.
- s.* Then is the world one.
- m.* A goodly one; in which there are many prisons, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.
- s.* We think not so, my Lord.
- m.* Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so to me it is a prison.
- s.* Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.
- m.* O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a King of infinite space: but that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition: for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars, bodies; and our monarchs, and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows: Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros. Guil. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.] But, in the beaten way of friendship, what you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my Lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me, come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my Lord?

Ham. Any thing — but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know, the good King and Queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my Lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal,

even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. What say you? [*To GUILDENSTERN.*

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you; [*Aside.*]
—if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My Lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moults no feather. I have of late, (but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises: and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form, and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me,—nor woman neither; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Ros. My Lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said,
Man delights not me?

Ros. To think, my Lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way; and *hither are they coming*, to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the King, shall be wel-

come; his Majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil, and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis: the humorous man shall end his part in peace: the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o'the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. — What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chanceth it, they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation that they did when I was in the city? Are they so follow'd?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

[*Ham.* How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, Sir, an airy of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapp'd for't: these are not the fashion; and so berattle the common stage (so they call them) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? Who maintains them? how are they escoted? Will they purchase the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. Faith, there has been much to do

both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them on to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my Lord; Hercules and his load too.]

Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle is King of Denmark; and those, that would make mouths at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. *[Flourish of trumpets within.]*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb; lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear Lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, Gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern; —and you too; —at each ear a hearer: that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swadling-clouts.

H A M L E T,

Ros. Haply, he's the second time come to them; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophecy, he comes to tell me the players; mark it.— You say right, Sir: o'mo day morning; 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My Lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My Lord, I have news to tell you. W Roscius was an actor in Rome —

Pol. The actors are come hither, my Lor Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon my honour, —

Ham. *Then came each actor on his as*

Pol. The best actors in the world, eit tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-al, historical-pastoral, [tragical-historical, al-comical, historica'-pastoral,] scene ind or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be tior Plautus too light. For the law of v the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephtha, judge of Israel, treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my I

Ham. Why — *One fair daughte* more,

The which he loved passin

Pol. Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i'the right, old

Pol. If you call me Jephtha, my a daughter, that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my L

Ham. Why, *As by lot, God you know, It came to pass, was, — The first row of the show you more; for look, my*

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, Masters! welcome, all:— I am glad to see thee well: welcome, good friends — O, old friend! Why thy face is valanced since I saw thee last; Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?— What? my young Lady and Mistress! By-'r-lady, your Ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack'd within the ring. — Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: We'll have a speech straight; Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 Play. What speech, my Lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, — but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgements, in such matters, cried in the top of mine,) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no sallies in the lines, to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the author of affection: but call'd it, an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: If it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see; —

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,
— 'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

H A M L E T,

*Pyrrhus, — he, whose sable arms,
purpose, did the night resemble
y couched in the ominous horse,
this dread and black complexion
smear'd*

*try more dismal; head to foot
total gules; horridly trick'd
of fathers, mothers, daughters,
sons;*

*npasted with the parching streets,
tyrannous and a damned light
ord's murder: Roasted in wrath,
and fire,*

*er-sized with coagulate gore,
like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
ire Priam seeks, — So proceed you.
God, my Lord, well spoken; with
nd good discretion.*

*Anon he finds him
o short at Greeks; his antique
sword,*

*to his arm, lies where it falls,
to command: Unequal match'd,
Priam drives: in rage, strikes wide;
he whiff and wind of his fell sword
ved father falls. Then senseless
Ilium,*

*feel this blow, with flaming top
his base; and with a hideous crash
oner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his
sword*

*But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death: anon, the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding
sword*

Now falls on Priam. —

*Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you
gods,*

*In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her
wheel,*

*And bowl the round nave down the hill of
heaven.*

As low as to the fiends!

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.
— Pr'ythee, say on: — He's for a jig, or a tale
of bawdry, or he sleeps: — say on: come to He-
cuba.

1. *Play.* *But who, ah woe! had seen the
mobled Queen —*

Ham. The mobled Queen?

Pol. That's good? mobled Queen is good.

1. *Play.* *Run barefoot up and down,
threat'ning the flames*

*With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a
robe,*

*About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;*

*Who this had seen, with tongue in venom
steep'd,*

*'Gainst fortune's state would treason have
pronounc'd:*

*But if the gods themselves did see her then;
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's
limbs;*

*The instant burst of clamour that she made,
(Unless things mortal move them not at all,)
Would have made milch the burning eyes
of heaven,*

And passion in the gods.

Pol. Look, whether he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes. — Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. — Good my Lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract, and brief chronicles, of the time: After your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My Lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Odd's bodikin, man, much better: Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, Sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. — Dost thou hear me, old friend, can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1. Play. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. Ye could, for a need, study a speech of some do

or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could you not?

1. *Play.* Ay, my Lord.

Ham. Very well. — Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exeunt* POLONIUS and Players.] My good friends, [*To* Ros. and GUIL.] I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good, my Lord!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' you: — Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That, from her working, all his visage wann'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function sniting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion,
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a King,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,

A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?

Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?

Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i'the
throat,

As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?

Ha!

Why, I should take it: for it cannot be,

But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall

To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,

I should have fatted all the region kites

With this slave's offal: Bloody, bawdy villain!

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless vil-
lain!

Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave!

That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,

Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,

Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,

And fall a cursing, like a very drab,

A scullion!

Fie upon't! foh! About my brains! Humph! I
have heard,

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,

Have by the very cunning of the scene

Been struck so to the soul, that presently

They have proclaim'd their malefactions:

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak

With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players

Play something like the murder of my father,

Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;

I'll tent him to the quick; if he do blench,

I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,

May be a devil: and the devil hath power

To assume a pleasing shape; yea and, perhaps,

Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,

(As he is very potent with such spirits,)

Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds

More relative than this: The play's the thing,

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King. [Exit

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

59

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you by no drift of conference
Get from him, why he puts on this confusion;
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way: of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: They are about the court;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your Majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much
content me

To hear him so inclin'd.

Good Gentlemen, give him a further edge,

And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my Lord.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too.
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia:

I'll father that fellow as my son,
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If't be the affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you:
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope, your virtue
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit QUEEN*]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here: — Gracious, as
please you,

We will bestow ourselves: — Read on this book
[*To OPHELIA*]

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. — We are oft to blame in this, —
'Tis too much prov'd, — that, with devotion's visage
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true! how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beauty'd with plastring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burden!

[*Aside*]

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Pol. I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my Lord.
[*Exeunt King and POLONIUS.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them? — To die, — to sleep;
No more; — and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, — 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die; — to sleep;
To sleep! perchance to dream; — ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: There's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life;
But that the dread of something after death, —
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns, — puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,

And lose the name of action. — Soft you, now !
The fair Ophelia : — Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my Lord,

How does your Honour for this many a day ?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well.

Oph. My Lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver ;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd Lord, you know right well,
you did ;

And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
There, my Lord.

Ham. Ha, ha; are you honest?

Oph. My Lord?

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your Lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest, and fair, you
should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my Lord, have better com-
merce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will
sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd,
that the force of honesty can translate beauty into
his likeness: this was some time a paradox, but
now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my Lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me: for
virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we
shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery; Why would'st thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in: What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all: believe none of us: Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my Lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him; that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry; Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell: Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough, what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance: Go to; I'll no more of't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

[Exit HAMLET.]

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!

The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,
sword:

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers! quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his musick vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me!
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King and POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his
soul,

O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose,
Will be some danger. Which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down: He shall with speed to England
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart:
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't

Pol. It shall do well: But yet I do believe,
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. — How now, Ophel
*You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. — My Lord, do as you please
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,*

Let his Queen mother all alone entreat him
 To show his grief; let her be round with him;
 And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
 Of all their conference: If she find him not,
 To England send him; or confine him, where
 Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:

Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Hall in the same.

Enter HAMLET, and certain Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious perriwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings: who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipp'd for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: Pray you, avoid it.

1. *Play.* I warrant your Honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'er-step not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the pur-

pose of playing, whose end, both at the first now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the up to nature; to show virtue her own scorn her own image, and the very age and of the time, his form and pressure. Not overdone, or come tardy off, though it be unskilful laugh, cannot but make the jester grieve; the censure of which one, must, allowance, o'er-weigh a whole theatre of O, there be players, that I have seen play, heard others praise, and that highly, — not it profanely, that, neither having the accent of tians, nor the gait of christian, pagan, nor have so strutted, and bellow'd, that I have some of nature's journeymen had made me not made them well, they imitated human abominably.

1. *Play.* I hope, we have reform'd it differently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let that play your clowns, speak no more than down for them: for there be of them, that themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of spectators to laugh too; though in the mean some necessary question of the play be thus considered: that's villainous; and shows pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go you ready. — [Exeunt

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my Lord? will the King hear this of work?

Pol. And the Queen too, and that presence

Ham. Did the players make haste. —

[Exit T

Will you two help to hasten them?

Both. Ay, my Lord.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Ham. What, ho; Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet Lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear Lord,—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter:

For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed, and clothe thee? Why should the poor
be flatter'd?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp;
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,
She hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and bless'd are those
Whose blood and judgement are so well co-mingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please: Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the King;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul

Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note:
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
And, after, we will both our judgements join
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my Lord:
If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must
be idle: •

Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter King, Queen,
POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDEN-
STERN, and Others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i'faith; of the camelion's dish:
I eat the air, promise-cramm'd: You cannot feed
capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Ham-
let; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now. My Lord, — you
play'd once in the university, you say?

[*To POLONIUS.*

Pol. That did I, my Lord; and was accounted
a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Caesar: I was kill'd
i'the Capitol; Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him, to kill so
capital a calf there. — Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my Lord; they stay upon your pa-
tience.

PRINCE OF DENMARK: 69

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. O ho! do you mark that? [*To the King.*]

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at OPHELIA's feet.*]

Oph. No, my Lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. Do you think, I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my Lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my Lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my Lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. O! your only jig-maker. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my Lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a-year: But, by'r-lady, he must build churches then: or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse; whose epitaph is, *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*

Trumpets sound. The dumb show follows.

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels,

and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon, comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end, accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my Lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho: it means mischief.

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him: Be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught; I'll mark the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my Lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King and a Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart
gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and
moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my Lord, it nothing must:
For women fear too much, even as they love;
And women's fear and love hold quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P. King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and
shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou —

P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. That's wormwood.

P. Queen. The instances, that second marriage
move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love;

A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe, you think what now you
speak;

But, what we do determine, oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory;
Of violent birth, but poor validity:
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose,
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,
That even our loves should with our fortunes
change;

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark, his favourite flie
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun, —
Our wills, and fates, do so contrary run,
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our
own:

*So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.*

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor
heaven light!

Sport and repose lock from me, day, and night!

To desperation turn my trust and hope!

An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!

Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,

Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!

Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,

If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now, —

[*To OPHELIA.*

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me
here a while;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile

The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;

And never come mischance between us twain! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there
no offence in't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest;
no offence in the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the Duke's name; his wife, Baptista; you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: But what of that? your Majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: Let the ~~S~~all'd jade wince, our withers are unwrung. —

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the King.

H A M L E T

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my Lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my Lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you mistake your husbands. — Begin, murderer; leave thy damnable faces, and begin.

Come: ——— The croaking raven

Doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magick and dire property,

On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ear.*]

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate.
His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in, very choice Italian: You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The King rises.

Ham. What! frightened with false fire!

Queen. How fares my Lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light: — away!

Pol. Lights, lights, lights!

Ham. Why, let the strucken deep go weep.
[*Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.*]

The heart ungalled play:

For some must watch, while some must sleep.

Thus runs the world away. —
Would not this, Sir, and a forest of feathers

the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me,) with two Provencial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, Sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very — peacock.

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my Lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning, —

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha! — Come, some musick; come, the recorders. —

For if the King like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, — he likes it not, perdy. —

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Come, some musick.

Guil. Good my Lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The King, Sir, —

Ham. Ay, Sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distemper'd.

Ham. With drink, Sir?

Guil. No, my Lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my Lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, Sir:—pronounce.

Guil. The Queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my Lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my Lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: But, Sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command: or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: My mother, you say,—

Ros. Then thus she says; Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My Lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my Lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, Sir, but, *While the grass grows*, — the proverb is something musty.

Enter the Players, with Recorders.

O, the recorders: — let me see one. — To withdraw with you: — Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my Lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My Lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my Lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent musick. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me? You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much musick, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think, I am easier to be play'd on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, Sir!

Pol. My Lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by. — They fool me to the top of my bent. — will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [Exit POLONIUS]

Ham. By and by is easily said. — Leave me friends. [Exeunt ROS. GUIL. HOR. &c]

'Tis now the very witching time of night;
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: Now could I drink hot
blood,

And do such business as the bitter day
Would quake to look on. Soft; now to my
mother. —

O, heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

Let me be cruel, not unnatural:

I will speak daggers to her, but use none;

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:

How in my words soever she be shent,

To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [Ex]

S C E N E III.

A Room in the same.

Enter King, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe

To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you:
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow
Out of his luns.

Guil. We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your Majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound;
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance; but much more
That spirit, upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it, with it: it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone
Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy
voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. Guil. We will haste us.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My Lord, he's going to his mother's closet;
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I'll warrant, she'll tax him
home:

H A M L E T,

you said, and wisely was it said,
 that some more audience, than a mother,
 sure makes them partial, should o'erhear
 each, of vantage. Fare you well, my Liege:
 upon you ere you go to bed,
 and you what I know.

Thanks, dear my Lord. [*Exit* POLONIUS.
 Offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
 the primal eldest curse upon't,
 her's murder!—I pray can I not,

that inclination be as sharp as will;
 longer guilt defeats my strong intent;
 like a man to double business bound,
 and in pause where I shall first begin,
 both neglect. What if this cursed hand
 be thicker than itself with brother's blood?
 ere not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
 to wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
 to confront the visage of offence?

What's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
 be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
 pardon'd, being down? Then I'll look up;
 my fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
 can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!—
 that cannot be; since I am still possess'd
 of those effects for which I did the murder,
 my crown, mine own ambition, and my Queen:
 may one be pardon'd, and retain the offence?
 In the corrupted currents of this world,
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
 And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law: But 'tis not so above:
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
 give in evidence. What then? what rests?

Try

Try what repentance can: What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed soul; that, struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels, make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of
steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe;
All may be well! [*Retires, and kneels.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't; — And so he goes to heaven:
And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: And am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No.

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed;
At gaming, swearing; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't:
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven;
And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physick but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*]

The King rises, and advances.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain
below :

Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go. [*Exit.*

S C E N E IV.

Another Room in the same.

Enter Queen and POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay
home to him :

Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear
with ;

And that your grace hath screen'd and stood be-
tween

Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.

Pray you, be round with him.

Queen. I'll warrant you ;

Fear me not : — withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*POLONIUS hides himself.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother ; what's the matter ?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much of-
fended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much of-
fended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle
tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked
tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet ?

Ham. What's the matter now ?

Queen. Have you forgot me ?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And, — 'would it were not so! — you are my
mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can
speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you
shall not budge;

You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not
murder me?

Help, help, ho!

Pol. [Behind.] What, ho! help!

Ham. How now! a rat? *[Draws.*
Dead, for a ducat, dead.

[HAMLET makes a pass through the arras.]

Pol. [Behind.] O, I am slain. *[Falls, and dies.]*

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:

Is it the King?

[Lifts up the arras, and draws forth POLONIUS.]

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed; — almost as bad, good
mother,

As kill a King, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a King!

Ham. Ay, Lady, 'twas my word. —
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
[To POLONIUS.]

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune:

Thou find'st, to be too busy, is some danger. —

Leave wringing of your hands: Peace; sit you
down,

And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag
thy tongue

In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed,
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul; and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: Heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ah me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on
this;

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:

This was your husband. — Look you now, what
follows:

*Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?*

You cannot call it, love: for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgement; And what judge-
ment

Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you
have,

Else, could you not have motion: But, sure, that
sense

Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err;
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't,
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.

O shame? where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame,
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots,
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed;
Stew'd in corruption; honeying, and making love
Over the nasty sty;—

Queen. O, speak to me no more;
These words like daggers enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain:

A slave, that is not twentieth part the tythe
Of your precedent lord: — a vice of Kings:
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule;
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more.

Enter Ghost.

Ham. A King
Of shreds and patches: —
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! — What would your gracious
figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget: This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works;
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, Lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you?
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,
Starts up, and stands on end, O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him! — Look you, he
pale he glares!

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His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. — Do not look upon
me;

Lest, with this piteous action, you convert
My stern effects: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing, but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals
away!

My father, in his habit as he liv'd!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[Exit Ghost.]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful musick: It is not mad-
ness,

That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my vir-
tue:

For, in the fatness of these puffy times,

Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg;
Yea, curb and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in
twain.

Ham. O., throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to my uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this;
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on: Refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy:
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either curb the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night!
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. — For this same lord,
[Pointing to POLONIUS.]

I do repent; But heaven hath pleas'd it so, —
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night! —
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind. —
But one word more, good Lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat King tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you, his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or padding in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,

That I essentially am not in madness,
 But mad in craft. 'Twere good, you let him know:
 For who, that's but a Queen, fair, sober, wise,
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
 Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
 No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
 Let the birds fly; and, like the famous ape,
 To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
 And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of
 breath,
 And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
 What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack,
 I had forgot: 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters seal'd; and my two school-
 fellows, —

Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd, —
 They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
 And marshal me to knavery: Let it work;
 For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
 Hoist with his own petar: and it shall go hard,
 But I will delve one yard below their mines,
 And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
 When in one line two crafts directly meet. —
 This man shall set me packing.

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room:
 Mother, good night. — Indeed, this counsellor
 Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
 Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
 Come, Sir, to draw toward an end with you?
Good night, mother.

[Exeunt severally; HAMLET dragging in
POLONIUS;

H A M L E T,
A C T I V. S C E N E I.

The same.

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

King. There's matter in these sighs; these p
found heaves;
You must translate: 'tis fit we understand them
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while
[*To ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, "go out."*]

Ah, my good Lord, what have I seen to-night

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet

Queen. Mad as the sea, and wind, when b
contend

Which is the mightier: In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, *A rat! a rat!*
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out
haunt,

This mad young man: but, so much was our lo
We would not understand what was most fit;

*But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?*

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath

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O'er whom his very madness; like some ore,
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. — Ho! Guildenstern!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go, seek him out: speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[Exeunt Ros. and Guil.]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done: so, haply, slander, —
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot, — may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. — O, come away!
My soul is full of discord, and dismay. *[Exeunt.]*

S C E N E II.

Another Room in the same.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. — Safely stow'd, — *[Ros. &c. within.*
Hamlet! lord Hamlet!] But soft, — what noise?
who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my Lord, with the dead body?

Mam. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! — what replication should be made by the son of a King?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my Lord?

Ham. Ay, Sir; that soaks up the King's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the King best service in the end: He keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouth'd, to be last swallow'd: When he needs what you have glean'd, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my Lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My Lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the King.

Ham. The body is with the King, but the King is not with the body. The King is a thing —

Guil. A thing, my Lord?

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide for
and all after. [Exit

S C E N E III.

*Another Room in the same.**Enter King, attended.*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the
body.

How dangerous is 'it, that this man goes loose?
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes;
And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: Diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

Or not at all.—How now? what hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my Lord;
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my Lord; guarded, to know
your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten:
a certain convocation of politick worms are e'en at
him. Your worm is your only Emperor for diet:

we fat all creatures else, to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots: Your fat King, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a King; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a King may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i'the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*]

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, —

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, — must send thee
hence

With fiery quickness: Therefore, prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub, that sees them. — But,
come; for England! — Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

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Ham. My mother: Father and mother is man and wife: man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England. [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;

Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night:

Away; for every thing is seal'd and done

That else leans on the affair: Pray you, make haste,

[*Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,

(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;

Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red

After the Danish sword, and thy free awe

Pays homage to us,) thou may'st not coldly set

Our sovereign process; which imports at full,

By letters conjuring to that effect,

The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;

For like the hedick in my blood he rages,

And thou must cure me: Till I know 'tis done,

Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, and Forces, marching.

For. Go, Captain, from me greet the Danish King;

Tell him, that, by his licence, Fortinbras

Craves the conveyance of a promis'd march

Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.

If that his Majesty would aught with us,

We shall express our duty in his eye,

And let him know so.

Cap. I will do't, my Lord.

H A M L E T,

For. Go softly on.

[*Exeunt* FORTINBRAS and Forces

After HAMLET, ROSENCRANTS, GUILDENSTERN, &c

Ham. Good Sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, Sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, Sir,

pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who

Commands them, Sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, Sir
Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak. Sir, and with no addition
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand ducats,

Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and
That inward breaks, and shows no cause why
Why the man dies. — I humbly thank you,

Cap. God be wi' you, Sir. [*Exit C*

Ros. Will't please you go, my Lord?

Ham. I will be with you straight, Go
before. [*Exeunt* Ros. and

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a
his chief good, and market of his tir

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And, ever, three parts coward, — I do not know
Why yet I live to say, *This thing's to do*;
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and
means.

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Elsinore. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter Queen and HORATIO.

Queen.—I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate; indeed, distract;
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Hor. She speaks much of her father: says, she
hears,
There's tricks i'the world; and hems, and beats
her heart?

Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt;
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts:
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield
them,

Indeed would make one think, there might be
thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Queen. 'Twere good, she were spoken with;
for she may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds:

Let her come in. [*Exit HORATIO.*]

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself, in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, with OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous Majesty of Denmark?
Queen. How now, Ophelia;

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

Oph. *How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff.
And his sandal shoon.* [Sings]

Queen. Alas, sweet Lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.
*He is dead and gone, Lady, [Sings]
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.*

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia, —

Oph. Pray you, mark.
White his shroud as the mountain snow [Sings]

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my Lord.

Oph. *Larded all with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers.*

King. How do you, pretty Lady?

Oph. Well, God'ield you! They say, the
was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what
are, but know not what we may be. God bless
your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray, let us have no words of this;
when they ask you, what it means, say you this.

*Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day,
All this morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:*

*Then up he rose, and don'd his cloat,
And dupp'd the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.*

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an
ou't:

*By Gis, and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fye for shame!
Young men will do't, if they come to
By cock, they are to blame.*

*Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed:*

[He answers.]

*So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.*

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must
patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to th
they should lay him i'the cold ground: My bro
shall know of it, and so I thank you for your g
counsel. Come, my coach! Good night Ladies; g
night, sweet Ladies: good night, good night. [E

King. Follow her close; give her good wa
I pray you. [Exit HOR

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death: And now behold
O Gertrude, Gertrude,

When sorrows come, they come not single spie
But in battalions! First, her father slain;

*Next, your son gone; and he most violent and
Of his own just remove: The people muddied
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts,
whispers,*

For good Polonius' death; and we have done but
greenly,

In hugger-mugger to inter him: Poor Ophelia
Divided from herself, and her fair judgement;
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France:
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death! [*A noise within.*]

Queen. Alack what noise is this?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend.

Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door:
What is the matter?

Gent. Save yourself, my Lord?
The ocean overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers! The rabble call him, Lord;
And as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry, *Choose we; Laertes shall be King!*
Ups, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be King, Laertes King:

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they
cry!

this is counter, you false Danish dogs.
ing. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*]

Enter LAERTES arm'd; Danes following.

Laer. Where is this King? — Sirs, stand you
all without.

Dan. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you give me leave.

Dan. We will, we will.

[They retire without the door.]

Laer. I thank you; — keep the door. — O thou
vile King,

Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood, that's calm, pro-
claims me bastard;

Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow,
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant like? —
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;
There's such divinity doth hedge a King,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. — Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd; — Let him go, Ger-
trude; —

Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled
with:

To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience, and grace to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation: To this point I stand, —
That both the worlds I give to negligence,

Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd
Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world's:
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your re-
venge,
That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and
foe,

Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll open
my arms;

And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child, and a true Gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgement 'pear,
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

*Enter OPHELIA, fantastically dress'd with
straws and flowers.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears, seven time salt;
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
Till our scale turn the beam, O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!

O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love: and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. *They bore him barefac'd on the bier
Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny:
And in his grave rain'd many a tear;*

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. *Hadst thou thy wits, and didst pursue
revenge,*

It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, *Down a-down, an y
call him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel becom
it! It is the false steward, that stole his master's
daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance
pray you, love, remember: and there is pansy
that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts;
remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbin
—there's rue for you; and here's some for me:
we may call it, herb of grace o'sundays: —
may wear your rue with a difference. — There
daisy. — I would give you some violets; but they
wither'd all, when my father died: — They
he made a good end, —

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,
Sing

Laer. *Thought and affliction, passion, hell
self,*

She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

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b. *And will he not come again?* [Sings.
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan;
God 'a mercy on his 'soul!

And of all christian souls! I pray God. God be
with you! [Exit OPHELIA.]

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
 Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
 Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
 And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
 If by direct or by collateral hand
 They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
 Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
 To you in satisfaction; but, if not,
 Be you content to lend your patience to us,
 And we shall jointly labour with your soul
 To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so;
 His means of death, his obscure funeral,—
 No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,
 No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,—
 Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
 That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall;
 And where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [Exeunt.]

Hor. What are they, that we—

Serv. Sailors, Sir;

They say, they have letters for you.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Hor. Let them come in.—
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted; if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1. *Sail.* God bless you, Sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

1. *Sail.* He shall, Sir, an't please him. There's
a letter for you, Sir; it comes from the ambassador
that was bound for England; if your name
be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [Reads.] Horatio, when thou shalt have
overlook'd this, give these fellows some money
of the King; they have letters for him.

1. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.
2. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.
3. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.
4. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.
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96. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.
97. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.
98. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.
99. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.
100. *Sail.* King; they have letters for him.

matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee: Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet.
Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

Another Room in the same.

Enter KING and LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquit-
tance seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend;
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears; — But tell me,
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things
else,

You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The Queen, his
mother,
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,)
She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections:—But my revenge will come.

Enter a Messenger.

King. From Hamlet! Who brought them?

They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them
Of him that brought them.

Leave up.

[Exit Messenger.

[Heads.] *High and mighty, you shall know,
I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow
shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when*

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I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return. Hamlet.
What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked,—*
And, in a postscript here, he says, *alone:*
Can you advise me?

Laer. I am lost in it, my Lord. But let him come;

It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.

King. If it be so, Laertes,—
As how should it be so?—how otherwise?—
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. Ay, my Lord;

So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now re-
turn'd,—

As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe;
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it, accident.

Laer. My Lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of

Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my Lord?

King. A very ribbaud in the cap of you
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables, and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. — Two
since,

Here was a gentleman of Normandy, —
I have seen myself, and serv'd against, the
And they can well on horseback: but this
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wond'rous doing brought his
As he had been incorpor'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well: he is the
indeed,

And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you:
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed
If one could match you: the scrimers of
nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor e
If you oppos'd them: Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,

That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.
Now, out of this, —

Laer. What out of this, my Lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Nor that I think, you did not love your
father;

But that I know, love is begun by time;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too-much: That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this *would*
changes,

And bath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this *should* is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o'the
ulcer:

Hamlet comes back; What would you undertake,
To show yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i'the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanc-
tuarize;

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber:
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame

The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in
gether,

And wager o'er your heads: he, being re
Most generous, and free from all contriv
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with e
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practi
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't:

And, for the purpose, I'll anoint my sw
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so ra
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my
With this contagion; that, if I gall him sli
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this;
Weigh, what convenience, both of time and
May fit us to our shape: if this should fail
And that our drift look through our bad p
ance,

'Twere better not assay'd; therefore, this
Should have a back, or second, that might
If this should blast in proof. Soft; —
see: —

We'll make a solemn wager on your cunn
I ha't:

When in your motion you are hot and dry
(As make your bouts more violent to that)
And that he calls for drink, I'll have p
him

*A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck
Our purpose may hold there. But stay, wh*

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet Queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow: — Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows ascant the
brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
Therewith fantastick garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long pur-
ples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call
them:

There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up:
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indu'd
Unto that element: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas then, she is drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor
Ophelia,

And therefore I forbid my tears: But yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out. — Adieu, my Lord!
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,

But that this folly drowns it.

King. Let's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore, let's follow. [1]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Church-yard.

Enter two Clowns, with spades, &

1. *Clo.* Is she to be bury'd in christian
that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2. *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; therefore, m
grave straight: the crowner hath set on h
finds it christian burial.

1. *Clo.* How can that be, unless she
herself in her own defence?

2. *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

1. *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo*; it ca
else. For here lies the point: If I drown
wittingly, it argues an act: and an act ha
branches; it is, to act, to do, and to p
Argal, she drown'd herself wittingly.

2. *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman

1. *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies th
good: here stands the man; good: If the
to this water, and drown himself, it is,
nill be, he goes; mark you that: but if t
come to him, and drown him, he dro
himself: Argal, he, that is not guilty of
death, *shortens* not his own life.

2. *Clo.* But is this law?

1. *Clo.* Ay, marry is't; crowner's - q

2. *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been bury'd out of christian burial.

1. *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st; And the more pity; that great folks should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even christian. Come; my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2. *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1. *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2. *Clo.* Why, he had none.

1. *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says, Adam digg'd; Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answer'st me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2. *Clo.* Go to.

1. *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2. *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame out-lives a thousand tenants.

1. *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well: But how does it well? it does well to those that do ill; now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2. *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1. *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2. *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell,

1. *Clo.* To't.

2. *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell,

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.

1. *Clo.* Cndgel thy brains no more about i
for your dull ass will not mend his pace wi
beating: and, when you are ask'd this questio
next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he m
kes, last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaugh
and fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit* 2. *Clo*

He digs, and sings.

*In youth when I did love, did love,
Methought, it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my beho
O, methought, there was nothing me.*

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his b
siness? he sings at grave-making.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a proper
of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: 'the hand of little emplo
ment hath the daintier sense.

2. *Clo.* *But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath clasp'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such.*

[*Throws up a scull*

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and cou
sing once: How the knave jowls it to the groun
as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the fir
murder! This might be the pate of a politician
which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that wou
circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my Lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say, *Goo
morrow, sweet Lord! How dost thou, good Lord*
This might be my lord such-a-one, that pr

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my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my lady Worm's; chapless, and knock'd about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them? mine ache to think on't.

1. Clo. *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade, [Sings.
For — and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.*

Ham. There's another: Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my Lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skin?

Hor. Ay, my Lord, and of calves-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which

out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow
— Whose grave's this, sirrah?

1. *Clo.* Mine, Sir. —

*O, a pit of clay for to be made [Sin
For such a guest is meet,*

Ham. I think it be thine; indeed; for thou
liest in't.

1. *Clo.* You lie out on't, Sir, and therefore
is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't,
it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say
is thine: 'tis for the dead, and not for the quick
therefore thou liest.

1. *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, Sir; 'twill away again
from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1. *Clo.* For no man, Sir.

Ham. What woman then?

1. *Clo.* For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

1. *Clo.* One, that was a woman, Sir; but, for
her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must
speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us.
By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken
note of it; the age is grown so picked, that the
tooth of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier
he galls his kibe. — How long hast thou been
grave-maker?

1. *Clo.* Of all the days in the year; I came
that day that our last King Hamlet overcame
Fortinbras.

Ham. How long's that since?

1. *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool
tells that: It was that very day that young Hamlet

born: he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1. Clo. Why, because he was mad: he shall cover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1. Clo. 'Twill not be seen in him there; there be men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

1. Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

1. Clo. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

1. Clo. Why, here in Denmark; I have been sexton here, man, and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i'the earth ere he rot?

1. Clo. 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corpses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying-in,) he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine years.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1. Clo. Why, Sir his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull now hath lain you i'the earth three-and twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

1. Clo. A whoreson mad fellow's it was; Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1. Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad roger, he pour'd a flaggon of Rhenish on my head o'

This same scull, Sir, was Yorick's scull, the King's jester.

Ham. This? *[Takes the scull.]*

Cl. E'en that.

Ham. Alas, poor Yorick! — I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorr'd in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chapfallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. — Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my Lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander look'd o'this fashion i'the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah!

[Throws down the scull.]

Hor. E'en so, my Lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: As thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: And why of that

loam, where to he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Caesar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:

O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!
But soft! but soft! aside; — Here comes the King,

Enter Priests, &c. in procession; the corpse of OPHÉLIA, LAERTES and Mourners following it; King, Queen, their Trains, &c.

The Queen, the courtiers: Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites! This doth betoken,
The gorse, they follow, did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life. 'Twas of some estate:
Couch we a while, and mark.

[Retiring with HORATIO.]

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,

A very noble youth: Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

1. *Priest.* Her obsequies have been as an-
laid

As we have warranty: Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctify'd have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on
her:

Yet here she is allow'd her Virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

1. *Priest.* No more be done!

We should profane the service of the dead,

MLET,

and such rest to her
ouls.

the earth;—

and unpolluted flesh

— I tell the, churlish priest,
shall my sister be,

wling.

he fair Ophelia!

to the sweet: Farewell!

[Scattering flowers.
ould'at have been my Hamlet's

wife;
bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet

maid,
trew'd thy grave.

eble woe

treble on that cursed head,

deed thy most ingenious sense

of! — Hold off the earth a while,

ught her once more in mine arms:

[Leaps into the grave.
ur dust upon the quick and dead;

hat a mountain you have made,

old Pelion, or the skyish head

ampus.

[Advancing.] What is he, whose grief

an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow

se wand'ring stars, and makes them stand

ter-wounded hearers? this is I,
e Dane

The devil take thy soul!

[Grappling with him.
Thou pray'st not well.

, take thy fingers from my throat;

gh I am not splenetic and rash,

in me something dangerous,

You'l't dri

id do't. —

is outface

e buried qu

ted, if thou

illions of

ageing his

Make Ossa

I rant as

Queen.

ed thus a

mon, as f

then that

in silence

(Ham.

That is

low?

Which let thy wisdom fear: Hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,——

Hor. Good my Lord, be quiet.

[The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.]

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,

Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum.— What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Zounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Would't weep? would't fight? would't fast? would't
tear thyself?

Would't drink up Esil? eat a crocodile?

I'll do't.— Dost thou come here to whine?

To outface me with leaping in her grave?

Be buried quick with her, and so will I:

And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us; till our ground,

Singeing his pate against the burning zone,

Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness:

And thus awhile the fit will work on him;

Anon, as patient as the female dove,

When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,

His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, Sir;

What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: But it is no matter;

I let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon
him.— [*Exit HORATIO.*
Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
To LAERTES.

We'll put the matter to the present push —
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son. —
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E II.

A Hall in the Castle.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, Sir: now shall you
see the other;—

You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my Lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of
fighting,

That would not let me sleep; methought, I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,
And prais'd be rashness for it, — Let us know,
Our indiscretion sometime serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that should
teach us,

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarl'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them: had my desire;

Finger'd their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
A royal knavery; an exact command, —
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life, —
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission; read it at more
leisure,

But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed?

Hor. Ay, 'beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villanies,
Or I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play; — I sat me down;
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, Sir, now
It did me yeoman's service: Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

Hor. Ay, good my Lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the King, —
As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them like the palm might flourish;
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma 'tween their amities;
And many such like as's of great charge, —
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more, or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordant:
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal:
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscrib'd it; gave't the impression; plac'd it sa-
fely,

The changeling never known: Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this
employment;

They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a King is this!

Ham. Does it not, think thee, stand me now
upon?

He that hath kill'd my King, and whor'd my
mother;

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage; is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be
damn'd,

To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from
England,

What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say, one.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,

That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll count his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace; who comes here?

Enter OSRICK.

Osr. Your Lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, Sir. — Dost know this waterfly?

Hor. No, my good Lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: he hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the King's mess: 'tis a chough; but as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet Lord, if your Lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his Majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, Sir, with all diligence of spirit: your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your Lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my Lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry and hot; or my complexion —

Osr. Exceedingly, my Lord; it is very sultry, — as 'twere, — I cannot tell how. — My Lord, his Majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, this is the matter, —

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[*HAMLET moves him to put on his hat.*]

Osr. Nay, good my Lord: for my ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you;—though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetick of memory; and yet but raw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your Lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. 'The concernancy, Sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, Sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, Sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant—

Ham. I would you did, Sir; yet, in faith if you did, it would not much approve me;—Well, Sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is —

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, Sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellow'd.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The King, Sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has impawn'd, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: Three of the carriages in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew, you must be edified by the marriage, ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, Sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would, it might be hangers till then. Deal on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish: Why is this impawn'd, as you call it?

Osr. The King, Sir, hath lay'd, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid, on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your Lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my Lord, the opposition of person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: please his Majesty, it is the breathing time of with me: let the foils be brought, the gentles willing, and the King hold his purpose, I win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain no but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver you so?

Ham. To this effect, Sir; after what fits your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your Lord

Ham. Yours, yours. — He does well, to commend it himself; there are no tongues else turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the she his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug, before suck'd it. Thus has he (and many more of same breed, that, I knew, the drossy age on,) only got the tune of the time, and out habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection which carries them through and through the fond and winnow'd opinions; and do but let them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My Lord, his Majesty commended to you by young Osrick, who brings back to that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes, they follow the King's pleasure: if his fitness speaks

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is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The King, and Queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The Queen desires you, to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my Lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou would'st not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my Lord, —

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gaingiving, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestal their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy angury; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRICK, and Attendants with foils, &c.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*]

Ham. Give me your pardon, Sir: I have done you wrong: —

But pardon it, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows, and you must needs have
heard,

How I am punish'd with a sore distraction.

What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and exception,
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.

Who does it then? His madness: I't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,

And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most

To my revenge; but in my terms of honour,

I stand aloof; and will no reconciliation,

Till by some elder masters, of known honour,

I have a voice and precedent of peace,

To keep my name ungor'd: But till that time,

I do receive your offer'd love like love,

And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;

And will this brother's wager frankly play.—

Give us the foils; come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine igno-
rance

Your skill shall like a star i'the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, Sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osrick. —
Cousin Hamlet,

You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my Lord;
Your Grace hath laid the odds o'the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:—
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well: These foils have all
a length? [*They prepare to play.*]

Osr. Ay, my good Lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that
table:—

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive Kings
In Denmark's crown have worn; Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth;
Now the King drinks to Hamlet. — Come, be-
gin; —

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, Sir.

Laer. Come, my Lord. [*They play.*]

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well, — again.

King. Stay, give me drink: Hamlet, this p
is thine;

Here's to thy health. — Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound; and cannon shot off with*

Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by aw
Come. — Another hit; What say you? [*They p*

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath. —
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brow
The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good Madam, —

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my Lord; — I pray you pa
me.

King. It is the poison'd cup; it is too lat
[*As*

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My Lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think it.

Laer. And yet it is almost against my consci
[*A*

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: Yo
but dally;

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afraid, you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They*

Osr. Nothing neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then, in scuff*
they change rapiers, and HAM
wounds LAERTES.

King. Part them, they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again, [*The Queen*

Osr. Look to the Queen there, ho!

Ham. They bleed on both sides: — How is it,
my Lord?

Osr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to my own springe;
Osrick;

I am justly kill'd, with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the Queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink, — O my
dear Hamlet! —

The drink, the drink; — I am poison'd! [*Dies.*

Ham. O villainy! — Ho! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! see it out. [*Laertes falls.*

Laer. It is here Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art
slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good;

In thee there is not half an hour's life;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand;

Unbated, and envenom'd: the foul practice

Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again: Thy mother's poison'd;

I can no more; — the King, the King's to blame!

Ham. The point

Envenom'd too! — Then, venom, to thy work.
[*Stabs the KING.*

Osr. and Lords. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends, I am but
hurt.

Ham. Here, then incestuous, murd'rous, damned
Dane;

Drink off this potion: — Is the union here?

Follow my mother. [*King dies.*

Laer. He is justly serv'd;

It is a poison temper'd by himself. —

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee.

Not think on me!

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I f
the .

I am dead, Horatio: — Wretched Queen, ad
You that look pale and tremble at this chan
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest,) O, I could tell you, —
But let it be: — Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it;
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;
Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man, —
Give me the cup; let go; by heaven, I'll
it, —

O God! — Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live
me?

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in
To tell my story. —

[*March afar off, and shot u*
'What warlike noise i

Os. Young Fortinbras, with conquest
from Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spir
I cannot live to hear the news from Englan
But I do prophecy; the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more

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Which have solicited, — The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart: — Good night,
sweet Prince;

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors,
and Others.*

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it, you would see?

If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry cries on havoc! — O proud
death!

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many Princes, at a shot,
So bloodily hast struck?

1. *Amb.* The sight is dismal;

And our affairs from England come too late:

The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,

To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,

That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:

Where should we have our thanks?

Hor. Not from his mouth,

Had it the ability of life to thank you;

He never gave commandment for their death.

But since, so jump upon this bloody question,

You from the Polack wars, and you from England,

Are here arriv'd; give order, that these bodies

High on a stage be placed to the view;

And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,

How these things came about: So shall you hear

Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;

Of accidental judgements, casual slaughters;

Of deaths put on by cunning, and forc'd cause;

And, in this upshot, purposes mistook

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Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune;
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on
more:

But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more
mischance.

On plots, and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likeli, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldiers' musick, and the rites of war,
Speak loudly for him. —

Take up the bodies: — Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead march.*

[*Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies; after
which, a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

**A
SELECTION
OF THE
MOST IMPORTANT NOTES
EXTRACTED
FROM
THE BEST COMMENTATORS
TO THE PLAYS
OF
WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.**

VOLUME XVII.



NOTES TO HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

****T**he original story on which this play is built, may be found in Saxo Grammaticus the Danish historian. From thence Belleforest adopted it in his collection of novels, in seven volumes, which he began in 1564, and continued to publish through succeeding years. From this work, *The Hystorie of Hamblett*, quarto, bl. l. was translated. I have hitherto met with no earlier edition of the play than one in the year 1604, though it must have been performed before that time, as I have seen a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which formerly belonged to Dr. Gabriel Harvey, (the antagonist of Nash) who in his own hand-writing, has set down Hamlet, as a performance with which he was well acquainted, in the year 1598. His words are these: "The younger sort take much delight in Shakspeare's Venus and Adonis; but his Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke, have it in them to please the wiser sort, 1598."

In the books of the Stationers' Company, the play was entered by James Roberts, July 26, 1616 under the title of "A booke called The Reve"

of *Hamlett, Prince of Denmarke*, as it was
ly acted by the Lord Chamberlain his servant

In *Eastward Hoe*, by George Chapman,
Jonson, and John Marston, 1605, is a fling at
Hero of this tragedy. A footman named *Ha*
enters, and a taward-bearer asks him—"St
Hamlet, are you mad?"

The frequent allusions of contemporary au
to this play sufficiently show its popularity. T
in Decker's *Bel-man's Nightwalkes*, 4to.
we have—"But if any *mad Hamlet*, hearing
smell villainie, and rush in by violence to
what the tawny diuels [gypsies] are dooing,
they excuse the fact" &c. Again, in an old
lection of Satirical Poems, called *The N*
Raven, is this couplet:

"I will not cry *Hamlet Revenge* my gre
"But I will call Hangman, Revenge on T
ves." STEE

Surely no satire was intended in *Eastward*
which was acted at Shakspeare's own playh
(Blackfriars,) by the children of the revels, in

The following particulars relative to the da
this piece, are borrowed from Dr. Farmer's *E*
on the Learning of Shakspeare, p. 85, 86,
cond edition:

"Greene, in the Epistle prefixed to his *Arce*
hath a lash at some 'vaine glorious tragedians,'
very plainly at Shakspeare in particular. — 'I
all these to the mercy of their *mother-ton*
that feed on nought but the crumbs that fall
the *translator's* trencher. — That could sca
latinize their neck verse if they should have r
yet *English Seneca* read by candlelight
many good sentences — hee will afford you

Hamlets, I should say, *handfuls* of tragicall speeches.'—I cannot determine exactly when this *Epistle* was first published; but, I fancy, it will carry the original *Hamlet* somewhat further back than we have hitherto done: and it may be observed, that the oldest copy now extant, is said to be 'enlarged to almost as much againe as it was.' *Gabriel Harvey* printed at the end of the year 1592, 'Foure Letters and certaine Sonnetts, especially touching *Robert Greene*;' in one of which his *Arcadia* is mentioned. Now *Nash's Epistle* must have been previous to these, as *Gabriel* is quoted in it with applause; and the *Foure Letters* were the beginning of a quarrel. *Nash* replied in 'Strange News of the intercepting certaine Letters, and a Convoy of Verses, as they were going *privilie* to victual the *Low Countries*, 1595.' *Harvey* rejoined the same year in '*Pierce's Supererogation*, or a new Praise of the old Asse.' And *Nash* again, in 'Have with you to *Saffron Walden*, or *Gabriell Harvey's* Hunt is up;' containing a full answer to the eldest sonne of the halter-maker, 1596."—*Nash* died before 1606, as appears from an old comedy called *The Return from Parnassus*. STEEVENS.

A play on the subject of *Hamlet* had been exhibited on the stage before the year 1589, of which *Thomas Kyd* was, I believe, the author. On that play, and on the hl. letter *Historie of Hamblet*, our poet, I conjecture, constructed the tragedy before us. The earliest edition of the prose-narrative which I have seen, was printed in 1608, but it undoubtedly was a republication.

Shakspeare's *Hamlet* was written, if my conjecture be well founded, in 1596. See *An Attempt to ascertain the Order of his Plays*. MALONE.

Page 2, line 3. *Hamlet,*] i. e. *Amleth*.
h transferred from the end to the beginning
 name. STEEVENS.

P. 3, l. 9. — *answer me:*] i. e. *me* w^h
 already on the watch, and have a right to de
 the watch-word. STEEVENS.

P. 3, l. 11. *Long live the King!*] This
 tence appears to have been the watch-word.

P. 3, l. 16. *'Tis now struck twelve;*] I str
 suspect that the true reading is — *new* struck

P. 4, l. 3. 4. *If you do meet Horatio*
Marcellus,

The rivals of my watch,] *Rivals* for
 ners. WARBURTON.

By *rivals* the speaker certainly means *par*
 (according to Dr. Warburton's explanation
 those whom he expected to watch with him.
 cellus had watched with him before; whether
 sentinel, a volunteer, or from mere curiosity
 do not learn: but, which ever it was, it i
 evident that his station was on the same spot
 Bernardo, and that there is no other centin
 them relieved. Possibly Marcellus was an of
 whose business it was to visit each watch,
 perhaps to continue with it some time. Ho
 as it appears, watches out of curiosity. But i
 II. sc. i. to Hamlet's question, — "Hold yo
 watch to-night?" Horatio, Marcellus, and
 nardo, all answer, — "We do, my honour'd L
 The folio indeed, reads — *both*, which one
 with great propriety refer to Marcellus and
 nardo. If we did not find the latter gentlein
such good company, we might have taken b
have been like Francisco whom he reliev

honest but common soldier. The strange indiscriminate use of Italian and Roman names in this and other plays, makes it obvious that the author was very little conversant in even the rudiments of either language. RITSON.

Rival is constantly used by Shakspeare for a partner or associate. In Bullokar's *English Expo-sitor*, 8vo. 1616, it is defined, "*One that sueth for the same thing with another;*" and hence Shakspeare, with his usual licence, always uses it in the sense of *one engaged in the same employments or office with another. Competitor*, which is explained by Bullokar by the very same words which he has employed in the definition of *rival*, is in like manner (as Mr. M. Mason has observed,) always used by Shakspeare for *associate*.

M. Warner would read and point thus :

*If you do meet Horatio, and Marcellus
The rival of my watch, —*

because Horatio is a gentleman of no profession, and because, as he conceived, there was but one person on each watch. But there is no need of change. Horatio is certainly not an officer, but Hamlet's fellow-student at Wittenberg: but as he accompanied Marcellus and Bernardo on the watch from a motive of curiosity, our poet considers him very properly as an *associate* with them. Horatio himself says to Hamlet in a subsequent scene,

" — This to me

" In dreadful secrecy impart they did,

" And I with them the third night kept the
watch." MALONE.

P. 4, l. 18. *A piece of him.*] But why a piece? He says this as he gives his hand. Which direction should be marked. WARBURTON.

A piece of him, is, I believe, no more cant expression. It is used, however, on a occasion in *Pericles*. STEEVENS.

P. 4, l. 28. — *to watch the minutes of the night;*] This seems to have been an expression common in Shakespeare's time. STEEVENS.

P. 4, l. 30. He may *approve our eyes*,] a new testimony to that of our eyes. JOHNSON.

He may make good the testimony of ours, to be assured by his own experience of the truth of that which *we* have related, *in consequence of having been eye-witnesses to it*. To *approve* in Shakspeare's age, signified to *make good* or *establish*. MALONE.

P. 5, first l. *What we two nights have seen*] This line is by Sir T. Hanmer given to Hamlet, but without necessity. JOHNSON.

P. 5, l. 14. *Thou art a scholar, speak to me in plain words.*] It has always been a vulgar notion that spirits and supernatural beings can only be spoken to with propriety or effect by persons of learning.

Thus the honest butler in Mr. Addison's *Cato*, recommends the steward to speak to the ghost in that play. REED.

P. 5, l. 17. — *it harrows me*—] To *harrow* is to conquer, to subdue. The word is of Saxon origin. STEEVENS.

P. 6, l. 9. — *parle*,] This is one of the affected words introduced by Lyly. STEEVENS.

P. 6, l. 10. — *sledded*—] A *sled*, or *sled*, is a carriage without wheels, made use of in cold countries. STEEVENS.

P. 6, l. 10 — *Polack*—] Pole-ax in the common editions. He speaks of a Prince's

whom he slew in battle. He uses the word *Polack* again, Act II. sc. iv. POPE.

Polack was, in that age; the term for an inhabitant of Poland: *Polaque*, French. JOHNSON.

All the old copies have *Polax*. Mr. Pope and the subsequent editors read — *Polack*; but the corrupted word shews, I think, that Shakspeare wrote — *Polacks*. MALONE.

With *Polack* for *Polander*, the transcriber, or printer, might have no acquaintance; he therefore substituted *pole-ax* as the only word of like sound that was familiar to his ear. Unluckily, however, it happened that the *singular* of the latter has the same sound as the *plural* of the former. Hence it has been supposed that Shakspeare meant to write *Polacks*. We cannot well suppose that in a *parley* the King belaboured many, as it is not likely that provocation was given by more than one, or that on such an occasion he would have condescended to strike a meaner person than a Prince. STEEVENS.

P. 6, l. 12. — *and jump at this dead hour,*] So, the 4to. 1604. The folio — *just*. STEEVENS.

The correction was probably made by the author. JOHNSON.

In the folio we sometimes find a familiar word substituted for one more ancient. MALONE.

Jump and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakspeare. Ben Jonson speaks of verses made on *jump names*, i. e. names that suit exactly.

STEEVENS.

P. 6, l. 15. *In what particular thought to work,*] What particular train of thinking to follow. STEEVENS.

P. 6, l. 17. — *in the gross and scope*] General thoughts, and tendency at large. JOHNSON.

P. 6, l. 25. *Why such impress of shipwrig.* Judge Barrington, *Observations on the more ancient Statutes*, p. 300, having observed that Shakespeare gives English manners to every country where his scene lies, infers from this passage, that in the time even of Queen Elizabeth, shipwrights as well as seamen were forced to serve. WHALLEY.

Impress signifies only the act of retaining shipwrights by giving them what was called *prest money* (from *pret*, Fr.) for holding themselves *readiness* to be employed. STEEVENS.

P. 7, l. 3. Well ratified by *law*, and *heraldry*. Mr. Upton says, that Shakespeare sometimes presses one thing by two substantives, and that *law* and *heraldry* means, by the *herald law*.

STEEVENS

Puttenham, in his *Art of Poesie*, speaks of the *Figure of Twynnes*, "*horses and barbes, barbed horses, venim & dartes, for venim dartes,*" &c. FARMER.

That is, according to the forms of *law* and *heraldry*. When the right of property was to be determined by combat, the rules of *heraldry* were to be attended to, as well as those of *law*. M. MALONE.

i. e. to be well ratified by the rules of law, the forms prescribed *jure fecialy*; such as promotion, &c. MALONE.

P. 7, l. 9-11. — by the same *co-mart*.

And carriage of the article *design'd*,] *Co-mart* signifies a bargain, and *carrying of the article* the *covenant* entered into to confirm that bargain. Hence we see the common reading [*covenant makes a tautology*. WAREBURTON.

Co-mart is, I suppose, a joint bargain, and perhaps of our poet's coinage. A mart signifies a great fair or market, he would not have a

to have written -- *to mart*, in the sense of *to make a bargain*. In the preceding speech we find *mar* used for bargain or purchase. MALONE.

Carriage, is import: design'd, is formed, drawn up between them. JOHNSON.

Cawdrey in his *Alphabetical Table*, 1604, defines the verb *design* thus: "To marke out or appoynt for any purpose." See also Minshew's Dict. 1617. "To *designe* or shew by a token." *Designed* is yet used in this sense in Scotland.

MALONE.

P. 7, l. 13. *Of unimproved mettle hot and full,*] *Full of unimproved mettle*, is full of spirit not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience. JOHNSON.

P. 7, l. 15. *Shark'd up a list of landless resolute,*] I believe, to *shark up* means to pick up without distinction, as the *shark-fish* collects his prey. The quartos read *lawless*, instead of *landless*. STEEVENS.

P. 7, l. 16. 17. — — — enterprize

That hath a *stomach* in't:] *Stomach*, in the time of our author, was used for *constancy, resolution*. JOHNSON.

P. 7, l. 24. *post-haste and romage*] Tumultuous hurry. JOHNSON.

P. 7, l. 25. and fol. These, and all other lines confined within crotchets throughout this play, are omitted in the folio edition of 1623. The omissions leave the play sometimes better and sometimes worse, and seem made only for the sake of abbreviation. JOHNSON.

It may be worth while to observe, that the title-pages of the first quartos in 1604 and 1605, declare this play to be *enlarged to almost as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect co*

Perhaps therefore many of its absurdities as beauties arose from the quantity added after it was first written. Our poet might have been more attentive to the amplification than the coherence of his fable.

The degree of credit due to the title-page styles the MS. from which the quartos, 1604, 1605 were printed, the *true and perfect* copy may also be disputable. I cannot help suppose this publication to contain all Shakspeare rejected as well as all he supplied. By restorations the former, contending booksellers or the editors might have gained some temporary advantage over each other, which at this distance of time is to be understood. The patience of our ancestors exceeded our own, could it have outlasted the gedy of *Hamlet* as it is now printed; for it has occupied almost five hours in representation. If, however, it was too much dilated on the ancient stage, it is as injudiciously contracted on the modern one. STEEVENS.

P. 7, l. 26. *Well may it sort,*] The cause and effect are proportionate and suitable. JOHNSON.

P. 7, l. 28. — the question —] The theme of the subject. MALONE.

P. 7, l. 29. A mote —] The first quarto has — a moth. STEEVENS.

A moth was only the old spelling of mote
MALONE.

P. 7, l. 30. *In the most high and palmy,*
of Rome,] *Palm*
victorious. POPP.

P. 7, last l. *As, stars with trains of fire*
dews of blood,

Disasters in the sun;] Mr. Rowe

these lines, because they have insufficient connection with the preceding one, thus:

Stars shone with trains of fire, dews of blood fell,

Disasters veil'd the sun, —

This passage is not in the folio. By the quartos therefore our imperfect text is supplied: for an intermediate verse being evidently lost, it were idle to attempt a union that never was intended. I have therefore signified the supposed deficiency by a vacant space.

When Shakspeare had told us that the *graves stood tenantless*, &c. which are wonders confined to the earth, he naturally proceeded to say (in the line now lost) that *yet other prodigies appeared in the sky*; and these phaenomena he exemplified by adding, — *As* [i. e. as for instance] *Stars with trains of fire*, &c. STEEVENS.

P. 8, l. 5-5. *And even the like precurse of fierce events, —*

As harbingers preceding still the fates,

And prologue to the omen coming on, —]

Not only such prodigies have been seen in Rome, but the elements have shown our countrymen like forerunners and foretokens of violent events.

JOHNSON.

Fierce, for terrible. WARBURTON.

I rather believe that *fierce* signifies *conspicuous glaring*. STEEVENS.

But *prologue* and *omen* are merely synonymous here. The poet means, that these strange *phaenomena* are prologues and forerunners of the events *presag'd*: and such sense the slight alteration, which I have ventured to make, by changing *omen* to *omen'd*, very aptly gives. THEOBALD.

Omen, for fate. WARBURTON.

Hammer follows Theobald.

A distich from the life of Merlin, by Heyw however, will show that there is no occasion for correction:

"Merlin well vers'd in many a hidden sp

"His countries omen did long since fore

FAR

Omen, I believe, is danger. STEEVENS.

P. 8, l. 10. and fol. The speech of Horat the spectre is very elegant and noble, and congruous to the common traditions of the cause of apparitions. JOHNSON.

P. 8, l. 19. 21. — *if thou hast uphoarded thy life*

*Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft
in death,]* So, in

ker's *Knight's Conjuring*, &c. "— If an them had bound the spirit of gold by any chains in caves, or in iron fetters under the ground they should for their own soules quiet (a questionlesse else would whine up and down) if not for the good of their children, release

STEEV

P. 8, l. 23-26. — Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my parti

Hor. *Do, if it will not stand.*] I am willing to suppose that Shakspeare could appropriate these absurd effusions to *Horatio*, who is a scholar, and has sufficiently proved his good understanding by the propriety of his addresses to the phantom. Such a man therefore must have known that

"As easy might he the intrenchant air

"With his keen sword impress,"

as commit any act of violence on the royal sh

The words — *Stop it, Marcellus, — and Do, if it will not stand* — better suit the next speaker, *Bernardo*, who, in the true spirit of an unlettered officer, *nihil non arroget armis*. Perhaps the first idea that occurs to a man of this description, is to strike at what offends him. Nicholas Poussin, in his celebrated picture of the Crucifixion, has introduced a similiar occurrence. While lots are casting for the sacred vesture, the graves are giving up their dead. This prodigy is perceived by one of the soldiers, who instantly grasps his sword, as if preparing to defend himself, or resent such an invasion from the other world.

The two next speeches — *'Tis here! — 'Tis here!* may be allotted to *Marcellus and Bernardo*; and the third — *'Tis gone!* &c. to *Horatio*, whose superiority of character indeed seems to demand it. — As the text now stands, *Marcellus* proposes to strike the Ghost with his partizan, and yet afterwards is made to descant on the indecorum and impotence of such an attempt.

The names of speakers have so often been confounded by the first publishers of our author, that I suggest this change with less hesitation than I should express concerning any conjecture that could operate to the disadvantage of his words or meaning. — Had the assignment of the old copies been such, would it have been thought liable to objection? STEVENS.

P. 9. l. 5 - 9. — *and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine: and of &c.]* According to the pneumatology of that time, every element was inhabited by its peculiar order of spirits, who had dispositions different, according to their various

places of abode. The meaning therefore is, ill *spirits extravagant*, wandering out of element, whether aerial spirits visiting earth, earthly spirits ranging the air, return to their tion, to their proper limits in which they are *fin*ed. We might read:

“— And at his warping

“Th’ extravagant and erring spirit hies

“To his confine, whether in sea or air,

“Or earth, or fire. And of,” &c.

But this change, though it would smooth the struction, is not necessary, and, being unnecessary, should not be made against authority.

JOHN

A Chorus in Andreini’s drama, called *Ad* written in 1613, consists of spirits of fire, water, and hell, or subterraneous, being the angels. “Choro di Spiriti ignei, aerei, acqued infernali,” &c. These are the demons to which Shakspeare alludes. These spirits were supposed to controul the elements in which they respectively resided; and when formally invoked or commanded by a magician, to produce tempests, flagrations, floods, and earthquakes. T. WAT

Bourne of Newcastle, in his *Antiquities of the common People*, inform us, “It is a tradition among the vulgar, that at the time of cockcrow, the midnight spirits forsake the lower regions, and go to their proper place. Hence it is, (says he) that in country places, the way of life requires more early labour, always go cheerfully to work at that time; while if they are called abroad sooner, they in every thing they see, a wandering ghost.” A quote on this occasion, as all his predecessors have done, the well-known lines from the first

of *Prudentius*. I know not whose translation he gives us, but there is an old one by Haywood. The *pious chansons*, the *hymns* and *carrols*, which Shakspeare mentions presently, were usually copied from the elder Christian poets. FARMER.

Extravagant i. e. got out of his bounds.

WARBURTON.

P. 9, l. 10. *It faded on the crowing of the cock;*] This is a very ancient superstition. Philostratus giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius Tyaneus, says that it vanished with a little glimmer as soon as the *cock crowed*. Vit. Apol. iv. 16. STEEVENS.

Faded has here its original sense; it *vanished*. *Vado*, Lat. MALONE.

P. 9, l. 16. No fairy *takes*,] No fairy *strikes* with lameness or diseases. This sense of *take* is frequent in this author. JOHNSON.

P. 10. l. 17. *With one auspicious, and one dropping eye;*] Perhaps, we have here only the ancient proverbial phrase—"To cry with one eye and laugh with the other," buckram'd by our author for the service of tragedy. See *Ray's Collection*, edit. 1768, p. 188. STEEVENS.

Dropping in this line probably means *depressed* or cast downwards. It may, however, signify *weeping*. "*Dropping of the eyes*" was a technical expression in our author's time. MALONE.

P. 10, l. 29. *Colleagued with this dream of his advantage,*] The meaning is, — He goes to war so indiscreetly, and unprepared, that he has no allies to support him but a *dream*, with which he is colleagued or confederated. WARBURTON.

This dream of his advantage (as Mr. M. Mason observes) means only "this imaginary advantage, which Fortinbras hoped to derive from the state of the kingdom." STEEVENS:

P. 11, l. 5. 6. — *to suppress*

His further gait herein;] *Gate* or *gait* is here used in the northern sense, for *proceeding, passage*; from the A. S. verb *gæ*. A *gate* for a path, passage, or street, is still current in the north. PERCY.

P. 11, l. 12. 13. — *more than the scope*

Of these dilated articles allow,] *More* is comprized in the general design of these articles, which you may explain in a more diffuse and dilated style. JOHNSON.

— *these dilated articles*] i. e. the articles when dilated. MUSGRAVE.

— *allow*. The poet should have written *allows*. Many writers fall into this error, when a plural noun immediately precedes the verb. MALONE.

P. 11, l. 25 - 27. *The head is not more native
to the heart,*

*The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy
father.]* The sense

seems to be this: The head is not formed to be more useful to the heart, the hand is not more at the service of the mouth, than my power is at your father's service. That is, he may command me to the utmost, he may do what he pleases with my kingly authority. STEEVENS.

By native to the heart Dr. Johnson understands, "natural and congenial to it, born with it, and co-operating with it."

Formerly the heart was supposed the seat of

wisdom; and hence the poet speaks of the close connexion between the heart and head. MALONE.

P. 12, l. 8-10. *Take thy fair hour, Laertes:*
time be thine,

And thy best graces: spend it at thy will.]

The sense is, — You have my leave to go, Laertes: make the fairest use you please of your time, and spend it at your will with the fairest graces you are master of." THEOBALD.

I rather think this line is in want of emendation. I read:

————— *time is thine,*
And my best graces: spend it at thy will.

JOHNSON.

P. 12, l. 11-13. But now, my cousin Hamlet,
 and my son, —

Ham. *A little more than kin, and less*
than kind.] Kind is
 the Teutonick word for *child*. Hamlet therefore answers with propriety, to the titles of *cousin* and *son*, which the King had given him, that he was somewhat more than *cousin*, and less than *son*.

JOHNSON.

In this line, with which Shakspeare introduces *Hamlet*, Dr. Johnson has perhaps pointed out a nicer distinction than it can justly boast of. To establish the sense contended for, it should have been proved that *kind* was ever used by an English writer for *child*. *A little more than kin*, is a little more than a common relation. The King was certainly something *less than kind*, by having betrayed the mother of Hamlet into an indecent and incestuous marriage, and obtained the crown by means which he suspects to be unjustifiable. In the fifth act, the Prince accuses his uncle of having *popp'd in between the election and his hopes*.

NOTES TO HAMLET,

which obviates Dr. Warburton's objection to the old reading, viz. that "the King had given no occasion for such a reflection."

As *kind*, however, signifies *nature*, Hamlet may mean that his relationship was become an *unnatural* one, as it was partly founded upon incest.

Dr. Farmer, however, observes that *kin* is still used for *cousin* in the midland counties.

STEEVENS.

Hamlet does not, I think, mean to say, as Mr. Steevens supposes, that *his uncle* is a little more than kin, &c. The King had called the Prince — "My cousin Hamlet, and my son." — His reply, therefore, is, — "I am a little more than thy kinsman, [for I am thy stepson;] and somewhat less than kind to thee, [for I hate thee, as being the person who has entered into an incestuous marriage with my mother]. Or, if we understand *kind* in its ancient sense, then the meaning will be, — *I am more than thy kinsman, for I am thy step-son*; being such, *I am less near to thee than thy natural offspring*, and therefore not entitled to the appellation of son, which you have now given me. MALONE.

P. 12, l. 16. 17. — *I am too much i'the sun*. He perhaps alludes to the proverb, "Out of heaven's blessing into the warm sun." JOHNSON.

Meaning probably his being sent for from studies to be exposed at his uncle's marriage as *chiefest courtier*, &c. STEEVENS.

I question whether a quibble between *sun* and *son* be not here intended. FARMER.

P. 12, l. 20. — *with thy veiled lids*]. *lowering eyes*, cast down eyes. JOHNSON.

P. 12, l. 22. *Thou know'st, 'tis common that live, mu*

Perhaps the semicolon placed in this line, is improper. The sense, elliptically expressed, is, — Thou knowest it is common *that* all that live, must die. — The first *that* is omitted for the sake of metre, a practice often followed by Shakspeare. STEEVENS.

P. 13, l. 6. 7. — *your father lost a father :*
That father lost , lost his ;] Mr. Pope judiciously corrected the faulty copies thus :
 — *your father lost a father ;*
That father , his ;

On which the editor Mr. Theobald thus descants :
 — *This supposed refinement is from Mr. Pope, but all the editions else, that I have met with, old and modern, read,*
That father lost , lost his ; —

The reduplication of which word here gives an energy and an elegance , WHICH IS MUCH EASIER TO BE CONCEIVED THAN EXPLAINED IN TERMS. I believe so : for when explained in terms it comes to this : — That father after he had lost himself, lost his father. But the reading is ex fide codicis, and that is enough. WARBURTON.

I do not admire the repetition of the word, but it has so much of our author's manner, that I find no temptation to recede from the old copies.

JOHNSON.

The meaning of the passage is no more than this, — *Your father lost a father, i. e. your grandfather, which lost grandfather, also lost his father.*

The metre, however, in my opinion, shows that Mr. Pope's correction should be adopted. The sense, though elliptically expressed, will still be the same. STEEVENS.

P. 13, l. 9. — *obsequious sorrow*:] *Obsequious* is here from *obsequies*, or *funeral ceremonies*.

JOHNSON

P. 13, l. 10. *In obstinate condolment*,] *Condolment*, for *sorrow*. WARBURTON.

P. 13, l. 12. *It shows a will most incorrect to heaven*;) *Incorrect*, for *untutor'd*. WARBURTON.

Incorrect does not mean *untutored*, as Warburton explains it; but *ill-regulated*, not *sufficiently subdued*. M. MASON.

Not sufficiently regulated by a sense of duty and submission to the dispensations of providence.

MALONE

P. 13, l. 20. *To reason most absurd*;) *Reason* is here used in its common sense, for the *faculty* by which we form conclusions from arguments. JOHNSON.

P. 13, l. 27. — *with no less nobility of love*,] *Nobility* for *magnitude*. WARBURTON.

Nobility is rather *generosity*. JOHNSON.

By *nobility of love*, Mr. Heath understands, *eminence and distinction of love*. MALONE.

P. 13, l. 28. 29. *Than that which dearest father bears his son,*

Do I impart toward you.] I believe *impart* is, *impart myself*, *communicate* whatever I can bestow. JOHNSON.

The crown of Denmark was elective.

The King means that as Hamlet stands the fairest chance to be next elected, he will strive with as much love to ensure the crown to him, as a father would show in the continuance of heirdom to a son. STEEVENS.

I agree with Mr. Steevens, that the crown of Denmark (as in most of the Gothick kingdom

ILET;

le Hamlet proposes

5, was not founded
exist in the time to
MALONE.

ved his knowledge of
The Life of Jack-
tory of Doctor Fau-
report (printed in the
written by an English
ittenberg, an Univer-
ay." RITSON.

ou to remain] i. e. sub-
go from hence, and re-

ling to my heart:] Sure-

my heart. RITSON.
ve signifies — near to, close;
STEEVENS.

cund health, that Denmark
drinks to-day,] The
is very strongly impressed;

ppens to him gives him occa-
NISON.

he King's rouse —] The King's
STEEVENS.

and resolve itself into a dew!] The ge-
e same as dissolve. STEEVENS.

7. Or that the everlasting had
not fix'd
gainst self-slaughter!] The ge-
ditions read — cannon, as if the
were, — Or, that the Almighty
ed his artillery, or arms of ven-
t self-murder. But the word which

In
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trary, is in

"Play or
"Shall"

Shakspear
present inst
and its imo
ST. HYPER

I restored (and which was espoused by the accurate Mr. Hughes, who gave an edition of this play) is the true reading, i. e. *that he had not restrained suicide by his express law and peremptory prohibition.* THEOBALD.

There are yet those who suppose the old reading to be the true one, as they say the word *fixed* seems to decide very strongly in its favour. I would advise such to recollect Virgil's expression:

"—— *fixit leges prætio, atque refixit.*"

STEEVENS.

In Shakspeare's time *canon* (*norma*) was commonly spelt *cannon*. MALONE.

P. 14, l. 23. — *merely.*] is *entirely, absolutely.* STEEVENS.

P. 14, l. 26. 27. So excellent a King; that was,
to this,

Hyperion to a *satyr*:] This similitude at first sight seems to be a little far-fetched; but it has an exquisite beauty. By the *Satyr* is meant *Pan*, as by *Hyperion*, *Apollo*. *Pan* and *Apollo* were brothers, and the allusion is to the contention between those gods for the preference in musick.

WARBURTON.

All our English poets are guilty of the same false quantity, and call *Hypërion* *Hypërion*; at least the only instance I have met with to the contrary, is in the old play of *Fuimus Troes*, 1333:

"—— Blow gentle *Africus*,

"Play on our poops, when *Hypërion* son

"Shall couch in west."

Shakspeare, I believe, has no allusion in the present instance, except to the beauty of *Apollo*, and its immediate opposite, the deformity of a *Satyr*. STEEVENS.

Hyperion or *Apollo* is represented in all the an-

cient statues, &c. as exquisitely beautiful, the satyrs hideously ugly. — Shakspeare may surely be pardoned for not attending to the *quantity* of Latin names, here and in *Cymbeline*; when we find Henry Parrot, the author of a collection of epigrams printed in 1613, to which a *Latin* preface is prefixed, writing thus:

“*Posthūmus*, not the last of many more,
“Asks why I write in such and idle vaine,”
 &c.

Laquei ridiculosi, or Springes for Woodcocks, 16mo. sign. c. 3. MALONE.

P. 14, l. 27-29. — *so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteem the winds of
 heaven*

Visit her face too roughly.] In former editions:

That he permitted not the winds of heaven—
This is not a sophisticated reading, copied from the players in some of the modern editions, for want of understanding the poet; whose text is corrupt in the old impressions: all of which that I have had the fortune to see, concur in reading:

—*so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteene the winds of
 heaven*

Visit her face too roughly.

Beteene is a corruption without doubt, but not so inveterate a one, but that, by the change of a single letter, and the separation of two words mistakenly jumbled together, I am verily persuaded, I have retrieved the poet's reading—

*That he might not let e'en the winds of
 heaven, &c.* THEOBALD.

The obsolete and corrupted verb—*beteene*, (in the first folio) which should be written (as in all

the quartos) *beteeme*, was changed, as above, by Mr. Theobald; and with the aptitude of his conjecture succeeding criticks appear to have been satisfied.

Beteeme, however, occurs in the tenth book of Arthur Golding's version of *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, 4to. 1587; and, from the corresponding Latin, must necessarily signify, to *vouchsafe*, *deign*, *permit*, or *suffer*.

The existence and signification of the verb *beteem* being established, it follows, that the attention of Hamlet's father to his Queen was exactly such as is described in the Enterlude of the *Life and Repentaunce of Marie Magdalaine*, &c. by Lewis Wager, 4to. 1567:

"But evermore they were unto me very tender,

"They would not suffer the wynde on me to blowe."

I have therefore replaced the ancient reading, without the slightest hesitation, in the text.

This note was inserted by me in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, some years before Mr. Malone's edition of our author (in which the same justification of the old reading — *beteeme*, occurs,) had made its appearance. STEEVENS.

This passage ought to be a perpetual memento to all future editors and commentators to proceed with the utmost caution in emendation, and never to discard a word from the text, merely because it is not the language of the present day.

Mr. Hughes or Mr. Rowe, supposing the text to be unintelligible, for *beteeme* boldly substituted *permitted*. Mr. Theobald, in order to favour his own emendation, stated untruly that all the old copies which he had seen, read *beteene*. His

ES TO HAMLET;

...earing uncommonly happy, was
the subsequent editors. MALONE.

20. — *I'll change that name
with you.]* I'll be your

shall be my friend. JOHNSON.

— *what make you—*] A familiar
at are you doing. JOHNSON.

4. — *good even.]* So the copies. Sir

ner and Dr. Warburton put it—good

the alteration is of no importance, but

s dangerous. There is no need of any

tween the first and eighth scene of this

parent, that a natural day must pass,

uch of it is already over, there is no-

can determine. The King has held a

may now as well be *evening* as *morn-*

NSON.

5-7. — *the funeral bak'd meats*

coldly furnish forth the marriage ta-
bles.] It was anciently

ral custom to give a cold entertainment to

s at a funeral. In distant counties this

is continued among the yeomanry.

COLLINS.

6, 1. 8. *'Would I had met my dearest foe
in heaven]* Dearest

rest, most dreadful, most dangerous.

JOHNSON.

arest is most immediate, consequential,
rtant. MALONE.

16, 1. 16. *I shall not look upon his like
again.]* Mr. Holt pro-

to read from an emendation of Sir Thomas
ell, Bart. of Upton, near Northampton:

ye shall not look upon his like again;

more in the true spirit of Shak-

speare than the other. So, in Stowe's *Chronicle*, p. 746; "In the greatest pomp that ever eye behelde." STEEVENS.

P. 16, l. 21. *Season your admiration*] That is, temper it. JOHNSON.

P. 16, l. 22. *With an attent ear* ;] Spenser, as well as our poet, uses *attent* for *attentive*.

MALONE.

P. 16, l. 28. *In the dead waist and middle of the night*,] This strange phraseology seems to have been common in the time of Shakspeare. By *waist* is meant nothing more than *middle*; and hence the epithet *dead* did not appear incongruous to our poet.

MALONE.

Dead waste may be the true reading.

STEEVENS.

P. 16, l. 34. 35. — — — distill'd.

Almost to jelly with the act of fear,] *Fear* was the cause, the active cause that *distilled* them by that force of operation which we strictly call *act* in voluntary, and *power* in involuntary agents, but popularly call *act* in both. JOHNSON.

P. 17, l. 10-12. Ham. *Did you not speak to it?*

Hor. *My Lord, I did;*

But answer made it none.] Fielding, who was well acquainted with vulgar superstitions, in his *Tom Jones*, B. XI. ch. ii. observes that Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "like a ghost, only wanted to be spoke to," but then very readily answered. It seems from this passage, as well as from others in books too mean to be formally quoted, that spectres were supposed to maintain an obdurate silence, still interrogated by the people to whom they appeared.

The drift therefore of Hamlet's question *is*, whether his father's shade had been spoken to; *and* not whether Horatio as a particular or privileged person, was the speaker to it. Horatio tells us he had seen the late King but once, and therefore cannot be imagined to have any particular interest with his apparition.

The vulgar notion that a ghost could only be spoken to with propriety and effect by a scholar, agrees very well with the character of Marcellus, a common officer; but it would have disgraced the Prince of Denmark to have supposed the spectre would more readily comply with Horatio's solicitation, merely because it was that of a man who had been studying at a university.

We are at liberty to think the Ghost would have replied to Francisco, Bernardo, or Marcellus, had either of them ventured to question it. It was actually preparing to address Horatio, when the cock crew. The convenience of Shakspeare's play, however, required that the phantom should continue dumb, till Hamlet could be introduced to hear what was to remain concealed in his own breast, or to be communicated by him to some intelligent friend, like Horatio, in whom he could implicitly confide.

By what particular person therefore an apparition which exhibits itself only for the purpose of being urged to speak, was addressed, could be of no consequence.

Be it remembered likewise that the words are not as lately pronounced on the stage,—"Did not *you* speak to it?"—but—"Did you not *speak* to it?"—How awkward will the innovated sense appear, if attempted to be produced from the *passage* as it really stands in the true copies!

Did you not speak to it?

The emphasis, therefore, should most certainly rest on — *speak*. STEEVENS.

P. 17, l. 15-17. — *the morning cock crew loud;*

*And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.]* The moment of the evanescence of spirits was supposed to be limited to the crowing of the cock. This belief is mentioned so early as by Prudentius, *Cathem. Hymn.* I. v. 40. But some of his commentators prove it to be of much higher antiquity.

It is a most inimitable circumstance in Shakspeare, so to have managed this popular idea, as to make the Ghost, which has been so long obstinately silent, and of course must be dismissed by the morning, begin or rather prepare to speak, and to be interrupted, at the very critical time of the crowing of a cock.

Another poet, according to custom, would have suffered his ghost tamely to vanish, without contriving this start, which is like a start of guilt. To say nothing of the aggravation of the future suspense, occasioned by this preparation to speak and impart some mysterious secret. Less would have been expected, had nothing been promised.

T. WARTON.

P. 17, l. 53. — *he wore his beaver up.]* Though *beaver* properly signified that part of the helmet which was *let down*, to enable the wearer to drink, Shakspeare always uses the word as denoting that part of the helmet which, when raised up, exposed the face of the wearer: and such was the popular signification of the word in his time.

MALONE

P. 18, l. 52. *My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;*] From what went before, I once hinted to Mr. Garrick, that these words might be spoken in this manner:

My father's spirit! in arms! all is not well;— WHALLEY.

P. 19, l. 16. 17. — — *sweet, not lasting, The perfume and suppliance of a minute;*] Thus the quarto: the folio has it:

— — *sweet, not lasting,*

The suppliance of a minute.

It is plain that *perfume* is necessary to exemplify the idea of *sweet, not lasting*. With the word *suppliance* I am not satisfied, and yet dare hardly offer what I imagine to be right. I suspect that *soffiance*, or some such word, formed from the Italian, was then used for the act of fumigating with sweet scents. JOHNSON.

The perfume and suppliance of a minute; i. e. what is supplied to us for a minute; or, as Mr. M. Mason supposes, “an amusement to fill up a vacant moment, and render it agreeable.”

STEEVENS.

P. 19, l. 22. *In thews,*] i. e. in sinews, muscular strength. STEEVENS.

P. 19, l. 25. *And now no soil, nor cautel, doth besmirch*

The virtue of his will;] *Cautel* from *cautela*, which signifies only a prudent foresight or caution; but, passing through French hands, it lost its innocence, and now signifies fraud, deceit. And so he uses the adjective in *Julius Caesar*:

“Swear priests and cowards, and men cautelous.” WARBURTON.

Cautel is subtlety or deceit. Minshew in b

Dictionary, 1617, defines it, "A crafty way to deceive."

Virtue seems here to comprise both *excellence* and *power*, and may be explained the *pure effect*.

JOHNSON.

The *virtue of his will* means, his *virtuous intentions*. *Cautel* means *craft*. M. MASON.

P. 20, l. 11. — *unmaster'd*] i. e. *licentious*

JOHNSON.

P. 20, l. 13. And *keep you in the rear of your affection.*] That is, do not advance so far as your affection would lead you. JOHNSON.

P. 20, l. 15. The *chariest* maid] *Chary* is cautious. STEEVENS.

P. 20, l. 31. And *recks not his own read.*] That is, heeds not his own lessons. POPE.

So, Sternhold, *Psalm*. i:

"— that hath not lent

"To wicked rede his ear" BLACKSTONE.

P. 21, l. 4. *The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,*] This is a common sea phrase. STEEVENS.

P. 21, l. 9. — *character.*] i. e. write; strongly infix. MALONE.

P. 21, l. 13. *Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel;*] The old copies read — with *hoops* of steel. I have no doubt that this was a corruption in the original quarto of 1604; arising, like many others, from similitude of sounds. The emendation, which was made by Mr. Pope, and adopted by three subsequent editors, is strongly supported by the word *grapple*; which is an instrument with several hooks to lay hold of a ship in order to board it.

It may be also observed, that *hooks* are sometimes made of steel, but *hoops* never. MALONE

P. 21, l. 14. 15. But do not dull thy pain
with entertainment

Of each new-hatch'd, unsledg'd comrade
The literal sense is, *Do not make thy pain
lous by shaking every man by the hand.* The
figurative meaning may be, *Do not by promi-
cuous conversation make thy mind insensit-
to the difference of characters.* JOHNSON.

P. 21, l. 19. Take each man's censure,] *Cen-
sure* is opinion. So in *King Henry VI.* P. II.

"The King is old enough to give his censure
STEEVEN

P. 21, l. 23. 24. And they in France, of the
best rank and station.

Are most select and generous, chief in that
I think the whole design of the precept shows
should read:

Are most select, and generous chief,
that.

Chief may be an adjective used adverbially,
practice common to our author: chiefly generous
Yet it must be owned that the punctuation recom-
mended is very stiff and harsh.

I would, however, more willingly read:

And they in France, of the best rank and
station,

Select and generous, are most choice
that.

Let the reader, who can discover the slight
approach towards sense, harmony, or metre,
the original line, —

Are of a most select and generous chief,
that. —

adhere to the old copies. STEEVENS.

The genuine meaning of the passage requires us to point the line thus:

"Are most select and generous, chief in that." i. e. the nobility of France are select and generous above all other nations, and chiefly in the point of apparel; the richness and elegance of their dress. RITSON.

The substantive *chief*, which signifies in heraldry the upper part of the shield, appears to have been in common use in Shakspeare's time, and the meaning seems to be, *They in France approve themselves of a most select and generous escutcheon by their dress. Generous* is used with the signification of *generosus*. So, in *Othello*: "The generous islanders," &c.

Chief, however, may have been used as a substantive, for *note* or *estimation*, without any allusion to heraldry, though the word was perhaps originally *heraldick*.

Our poet from various passages in his works, appears to have been accurately acquainted with all the terms of heraldry. MALONE.

P. 21, l. 27. — the edge of husbandry.] i. e. of thrift; oeconomical prudence. MALONE.

P. 21, l. 31. — my blessing season this in thee!] Season, for *infuse*. WARBURTON.

It is more than to *infuse*, it is to infix it in such a manner as that it never may wear out.

JOHNSON.

P. 21, last but one l. — your servants tend.] i. e. your servants are waiting for you. JOHNSON.

P. 22, l. 2. 3. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.]
The meaning is, that your counsels are as sure of

remaining locked up in my memory, as if self carried the key of it. STREVENSON.

P. 22, l. 23. Unsifted in such perilous
cumstance,] Un-
for untried. Untried signifies either not *test*
or not *refined*; unsifted signifies the latter
though the sense requires the former.

WARBURTON

It means, I believe, one who has not sufficiently
considered, or thoroughly sifted such matter

M. M.

I do not think that the sense requires us to
understand *untent*. "Unsifted in," &c. we
think, one who has not nicely *canvassed* and
examined the peril of her situation. MALONE.

P. 22, l. 30-33. — Tender yourself
dearly;

Or (not to crack the wind of the poor p

Wronging it thus,) you'll tender me a

The parenthesis is closed at the wrong place
we must have likewise a slight correction in
last verse. [*Wronging* it, &c.] Polonius is
and playing on the word *tender*, till he
proper to correct himself for the licence; and
he would say — not farther to crack the w
the phrase, by *twisting* it and *contorting*
I have done. WARBURTON.

I believe, the word *wronging* has reference
not to the phrase, but to Ophelia; if you
wronging it thus, that is, *if you continue*
on thus wrong. This is a mode of speaking
haps not very grammatical, but very common
nor have the best writers refused it:

"To sinner it or saint it,"
is in Pope. And Rowe,

"—— Thus to cōy it,
"With one who knows you too."

The folio has it—*Roaming* it thus. That is, *letting yourself loose to such improper liberty*. But wronging seems to be more proper. JOHNSON.

P. 22, last l. & P. 23, first l. Oph. *My Lord,*
he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. *Ay, fashion you may call it;]* She uses *fashion* for *manner*, and he for a *transient practice*. JOHNSON.

P. 23, l. 5. — *springes to catch woodcocks.]* A proverbial saying, "Every woman has a *springe to catch a woodcock*." STEVENS.

P. 23, l. 8. *Lends the tongue vows: these*
blazes, daughter,] Some epithet to *blazes* was probably omitted, by the carelessness of the transcriber or compositor, in the first quarto, in consequence of which the metre is defective. MALONE.

P. 23, l. 13. *Set your entreatments at a higher*
rate,] *Entreatments* here mean *company, conversation*, from the French *entretien*. JOHNSON.

Entreatments, I rather think, means the objects of *entreaty*; the favours for which lovers sue. MALONE.

P. 23, l. 16. — *tether—]* A string to tie horses. POPE.

Tether is that string by which an animal, set to graze in grounds uninclosed, is confined within the proper limits. JOHNSON.

Tether is a string by which any animal is fastened; whether for the sake of feeding or the air.
STARR

P. 23, l. 18. A *broker* in old English means *bawd* or *pimp*. MALONE.

P. 23, l. 18-22. *Do not believe his vows for they are brokers, Not of that die which their investments show,*

But mere implorators of unholy suits, Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds The better to beguile.] On which the editor Mr. Theobald, remarks, *Though all the editors have swallowed this reading implicitly, it is certainly corrupt; and I have been surprised how men of genius and learning could let it pass without some suspicion. What idea we frame to ourselves of a breathing bond, of its being sanctified and pious, &c. But I was too hasty in framing ideas before he understood those already framed by the poet, and pressed in very plain words. Do not believe (Polonius to his daughter) Hamlet's amorous vows made to you; which pretend religion in them (the better to beguile) like those sanctified and pious vows [or bonds] made to heaven. And should not this pass without suspicion?*

WARBURTON.

Theobald for *bonds* substitutes *bawds*. JOHN. Notwithstanding Warburton's elaborate explanation of this passage, I have not the least doubt Theobald is right, and that we ought to read *bawds* instead of *bonds*. Indeed the present reading is little better than nonsense.

Polonius had called Hamlet's vows, *brokers* but two lines before, a synonymous word to *bawds* and the very title that Shakspeare gives to Parolus, in his *Troilus and Cressida*. The words *implorators of unholy suits*, are an exact de

tion of a *bawd*; and all such of them as are crafty in their trade, put on the appearance of sanctity, and are not of that die which their investments shew." M. MASON.

The old reading is indoubtedly the true one. Do not, says Polonius, believe his vows, for they are merely uttered for the purpose of persuading you to yield to a criminal passion, though they appear only the genuine effusion of a pure and lawful affection, and assume the semblance of those sacred engagements entered into at the altar of wedlock. The *bonds* here in our poet's thoughts were *bonds of love*.

Dr. Warburton certainly misunderstood this passage, and when he triumphantly asks "why may not this pass without suspicion?" if he means his own comment, the answer is, because it is not perfectly accurate. MALONE.

P. 23, l. 23-25. *I would not, in plain terms,
from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the lord
Hamlet.]* Polonius

says, *in plain terms*, that is, not in language less elevated or embellished than before, but *in terms that cannot be misunderstood*: *I would not have you so disgrace your most idle moments, as not to find better employment for them than lord Hamlet's conversation.* JOHNSON.

P. 23, last l. — *an eager air.*] That is, a sharp air, *aigre*, Fr. MALONE.

P. 24, l. 11. — *and takes his rouse,*] A *rouse* is a large dose of liquor, a debauch. STEEVENS.

P. 24, l. 12. — *the swaggering up-spring reels*
The blustering upstart. JOHNSON.

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

P. 24, l. 32. — *complexion,*] i. e. hum
as sanguine, melancholy, phlegmatick, &c.

WARBURTON

P. 24, l. 34. 35. — *that too much o'er*
vens

The form of plausive manners;] That i
mingles too much with their manners; infect
corrupts them. *Plausive* in our poet's age s
fied gracious, pleasing, popular.

Plausible, in which sense *plausive* is here
is defined by Cawdrey in his *Alphabetical T*
&c. 1604, "*Pleasing*, or received joyfully
willingly." MALONE.

P. 25, first l. Being nature's livery, or
tune's star,] The
star in the text signifies a *scar* of that appear
It is a term of *farriery*: the *white star* or
so common on the forehead of a dark colo
horse, is usually produced by making a *scar*
the place. RITSON.

Some accidental blemish, the consequence o
overgrowth of some complexion or humou
lotted to us by fortune at our birth, or some
cious habit accidentally acquired afterwards.

Theobald, plausibly enough, would read—
tune's *scar*. MALONE.

P. 25, l. 3. *As infinite as man may under*
As large as can be accumulated upon man.

JOHN

P. 25, l. 5-7. — *The dram of base*

Doth all the noble substance often dont
To his own scandal.] I once propose
read—*Doth all the noble substance (i. e*
sum of good qualities) oft do out. We
now say, — To its own scandal; but his
are perpetually confounded in the old copy

As I understand the passage, there is little difficulty in it. This is one of the phrases which at present are neither employed in writing, nor perhaps are reconcilable to propriety of language.

To *do a thing out*, is to *extinguish it*, or to *efface* or *obliterate any thing pointed or written*.

In the first of these significations it is used by Drayton, in the 5th Canto of his *Baron's Wars*:

"Was ta'en in battle, and his eyes out-done.

My conjecture—*do out*, instead of *doubt*, might have received support from the pronunciation of this verb in Warwickshire, where they always say—"dout the candle,"—"dout the fire;" i. e. put out or extinguish them. The forxex by which a candle is extinguished is also there called—a *douter*.

Dout, however, is a word formed by the coalescence of two others, (*do* and *out*) like *don* for *do on*, *doff* for *do off*, both of which are used by Shakspeare.

The word in question (and with the same blunder in spelling) has already occurred in the ancient copies of *Henry V*:

"—make incision in their hides,

"That their hot blood may spin in English eyes,

"And *doubt* them with superfluous courage:" i. e. *put* or *do* them *out*. I therefore now think we should read:

Doth all the noble substance often dout, &c. for surely it is needless to say—

—*the noble substance of worth dout*, because the idea of *worth* is comprehended in the epithet—*noble*.

N. B. The improvement which my former note on this passage has received, I owed, about four years ago, to the late Rev. Henry Homer, a native of Warwickshire. But as Mr. Malone appears to have been furnished with almost the same intelligence, I shall not suppress his mode of communicating it, as he may fairly plead priority in having laid it before the publick. This is the sole cause why our readers are here presented with two annotations, of almost similar tendency, on the same subject: for unwilling as I am to withhold justice from a dead friend, I should with equal reluctance defraud a living critick of his due. STEEVENS.

The quarto, where alone this passage is found, exhibits is thus :

— the dram of eale

Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,

To his own scandal.

To *dout*, as I have already observed in a note on *King Henry V.* signified in Shakspeare's time, and yet signifies in Devonshire and other western counties, to *do out*, to efface, to extinguish. Thus they say, "*dout* the candle," — "*dout* the fire," &c. It is exactly formed in the same manner as to *don* (or *do on*) which occurs so often in the writings of our poet and his contemporaries.

I have no doubt that the corruption of the text arose in the following manner. *Dout*, which I have now printed in the text, having been written, by the mistake of the transcriber, *doubt*, and the word *worth* having been inadvertently omitted, the line, in the copy that went to the press stood,

Doth all the noble substance of doubt, —

The editor or printer of the quarto copy, finding the line too short, and thinking *doubt* must

want an article, inserted it, without attending to the context: and instead of correcting the erroneous, and supplying the true word, printed —

Doth all the noble substance of a doubt, &c.

The very same error has happened in *King Henry V*:

“That their hot blood may spin in English
eyes,

“And *doubt* them with superfluous courage:
where *doubt* is again printed instead of *dout*.

That *worth* (which was supplied first by Mr. Theobald) was the word omitted originally in the hurry of transcription, may be fairly collected from a passage in *Cymbeline*, which fully justifies the correction made:

“————— Is she with Posthumus?

“From whose so many weights of *baseness*
cannot

“A dram of *worth* be drawn.”

This passage also adds support to the correction of the word *eal* in the first of these lines, which was likewise made by Mr. Theobald. — *Base* is used substantively for *baseness*: a practice not uncommon in Shakspeare. So, in *Measure for Measure*:

“Say what thou canst, my *false* outweighs
your *true*.”

Shakspeare, however, might have written — The dram of *ill*. This is nearer the corrupted word *eale*, but the passage in *Cymbeline* is in favour of the other emendation.

The meaning of the passage thus corrected is, *the smallest particle of vice so blemishes the whole mass of virtue*, as to erase from the minds of *mankind* the recollection of the numerous good *qualities* possessed by him who is thus blemished

by a single stain, and taints his general character.

To his own scandal, means so as to reduce the whole mass of worth to its own vicious and unsightly appearance; to translate his virtue to the likeness of vice.

His for *its* is so common in Shakspeare, that every play furnishes with examples. MALONE.

P. 25, l. 10-18. Ham. *Angels and ministers of grace defend us!*

Be thou a spirit of health, &c.] Hamlet's speech to the apparition of his father seems to consist of three parts. When first he sees the spectre, he fortifies himself with an invocation:

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
As the spectre approaches, he deliberates with himself, and determines, that whatever it be he will venture to address it:

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,

Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,

Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,

Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,

That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee, &c.

This he says while his father is advancing; he then, as he had determined, speaks to him, and calls him — Hamlet, King, Father, Royal Dane: O! answer me. JOHNSON.

P. 25, l. 16. *Thou com'st in such a questionable shape.*] By *questionable* is meant provoking question. HAMMER.

Questionable, I believe, means only propitious to conversation, easy and willing to be conversed with. So, in *As you like it*: "An unquestionable spirit, which you have not." UN-

TO HAMLET,

his last instance certainly signi-
be talked with. STEEVENS.
 perhaps only means *capable of*
with. To question, certainly
 ime signified to converse.

MALONE.

24. *Why thy canoniz'd bones,*
hears'd in death,
st their cerements! why the se-
pulchre,
we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,
d his ponderous and marble jaws,
thee up again!] Hamlet, amazed
 ion, which, though in all ages cre-
 n all ages been considered as the most
 nd most dreadful operation of super-
 cy, enquires of the spectre, in the most
 erms, why he breaks the order of na-
 turning from the dead; this he asks in
 fused circumlocution, confounding in
 e soul and body. Why, says he, have
 which with due ceremonies have been
 z death, in the common state of de-
 als, burst the folds in which they were
 Why has the tomb, in which we saw
 laid, opened his mouth, that mouth
 its weight and stability, seemed closed
 The whole sentence is this: *Why dost*
 , *whom we know to be dead?*

JOHNSON.

expression *hears'd in death* is meant,
 d secured with all those precautions
 usually practised in preparing dead bo-
 culture, such as the winding-sheet,
 flin, &c. perhaps embalming into the
 that death is here used, by a me-

re

b:
m
a
it
be
ca
e

tonymy of the antecedent for the consequents, for the rites of death, such as are generally esteemed due, and practised with regard to dead bodies. Consequently, I understand by *cerements*, the waxed winding-sheet or winding-sheets, in which the corpse was enclosed and sown up, in order to preserve it the longer from external impressions, from the humidity of the sepulchre, as embalming was intended to preserve it from internal corruption. HEATH.

By *hearsed in death*, the poet seems to mean, *reposed and confined in the place of the dead*.

MALONE.

P. 25, l. 25. — *in complete steel,*] It is probable that Shakspeare introduced his ghost in armour, that it might appear more solemn by such a discrimination from the other characters; though it was really the custom of the Danish Kings to be buried in that manner. Vide *Olaus Wormius*, cap. vii. "Struem regi nec vestibus, nec odoribus cumulant, *sua cuique arma*, quorundam igni et equus adjicitur." STEEVENS.

P. 25, l. 26-29. Making night hideous: and
we fools of nature,

So horribly to shake our *disposition*,

With thoughts beyond the reaches of our
souls?] *Fools of nature*, — The expression is fine, as intimating we were only kept (as, formerly, fools in a great family,) to make sport for nature, who lay hid only to mock and laugh at us, for our vain searches into her mysteries. WARBURTON.

Making us, who are the sport of nature, whose mysterious operations are beyond the reaches of our souls, &c. MALONE.

Disposition for frame. WARBURTON.

S TO HAMLET;

— a more removed ground:—]

STEEVENS. The value of a pin—
pin's fee;] JOHNSON.

That beetles o'er his base] That
base, like what is called a beetle-
erb is, I believe, of our author's
ONE.

— deprive your sovereignty of rea-
ling power of reason. When poets
t any quality or virtue with uncom-

, they do it by some allusion to re-
Thus, among the excellencies of
racter, our author distinguishes "his
nature," i. e. his natural superiority

his independent dignity of mind. I
d this instance to explain the former,
m told that "royalty of nature" has

opposed to bear some allusion to Ban-
nt prospect of the crown.
ive your sovereignty of reason, there-

s not signify to deprive your princely
rational powers, but, to take away
the command of reason, by which man
ed.

arburton would read deprave; but sever-
s are given in a note to King Lear, of
re's use of the word deprive, which is
reading. STEEVENS.

ve, deprive in this place signifies simply
away. JOHNSON.

, l. 18. The very place puts toys of
desperation,] Toys,
ims. WARBURTON.

1. 33. — I'll make a ghost of him that
lets me:] To let among

ha
m-
edi
be
to
th
w
c
2
t
t
t

our old authors signifies to prevent, to hinder. It is still a word current in the law, and to be found in almost all leases. STEEVENS.

P. 27, l. 7. *Heaven will direct it.*] Perhaps it may be more apposite to read "Heaven will detect it." FARMER.

Marcellus answers Horatio's question, "To what issue will this come?" and Horatio also answers it himself with a pious resignation, "Heaven will direct it." BLACKSTONE.

P. 27, l. 29. *And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,*] Chaucer has a similar passage with regard to the punishments of hell, *Person's Tale*, p. 195, Mr. Urry's edition: "And moreover the misese of hell, shall be in defeaute of mete and drinke." SMITH.

Nash, in his *Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devil*, 1595 has the same idea: "Whether it be a place of horror, stench and darkness, where men see meat, but can get none, and are ever thirsty," &c. Before I had read the *Persones Tale* of Chaucer, I supposed that he meant rather to drop a stroke of satire on sacerdotal luxury, than to give a serious account of the place of future torment. Chaucer, however, is as grave as Shakspeare. STEEVENS

This passage requires no amendment. As spirits were supposed to feel the same desires and appetites that they had on earth, to *fast* might be considered as one of the punishments inflicted on the wicked. M. MASON.

P. 27, l. 28. 29. *Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,*

Are burnt and purg'd away.] Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonic hell into the "purgatory of saulis in purgatory:" and it is observe-

HAMLET;

informs Hamlet of his
deeds done in his days of
nature

arg'd away, —"
similar to the Bishop's. I
tion as concisely as I can:
to suffer pain and tor-
tyndis, sum under the wat-
air sum: thus the mony vi-

ne corpus be done away
— Sixte Book of Eneados,

more like a Papist, than a Pla-
mage of Bishop Douglas is that
it:

any vices
n the corpus be done away

y words of our Liturgy, in
ayer for a sick person at the po
the office for the visitation of
soever defilements it may h
ing purged and done away.'

WHAT
Ghost. Revenge his foul
most unnatural mu

t this play was written before
contrary has been asserted I
ohnson's Appendix, I must b
m Dr. Farmer: "Shakspeare
no extraordinary actor; and
rformance was the Ghost in
et this *chef d'oeuvre* did not
an original stroke at it.

published in the year 1596, a pamphlet called *Wit's Miserie, or the World's Madness, discovering the incarnate Devils of the Age*, quarto. One of these devils is, *Hate-virtue, or sorrow for another man's good successe*, who, says the doctor, is a *foule lubber*, and looks as pale as the vizard of the *Ghost*, which cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet revenge.*" STEEVENS.

I suspect that this stroke was levelled not at Shakspeare, but at the performer of the Ghost in an older play on this subject, exhibited before 1589. See *An Attempt to ascertain the order of Shakspeare's Plays*, MAISON.

P. 28, l. 18-21. — *that I, with wings as swift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,*

May sweep to my revenge.] This similitude is extremely beautiful. The word *meditation* is consecrated, by the *mysticks*, to signify that stretch and flight of mind which aspires to the enjoyment of the supreme good. So that Hamlet, considering with what to compare the swiftness of his revenge, chooses two of the most rapid things in nature, the ardency of divine and human passion, in an *enthusiast* and a *lover*. WARBURTON.

The comment on the word *meditation* is so ingenious, that I hope it is just. JOHNSON.

P. 28, l. 23. 24. And duller should'st thou be
than the fat weed

That rots itself in ease on *Lethe wharf*,] Shakspeare, apparently through ignorance, makes Roman Catholicks of these Pagan Danes; and here gives a description of purgatory; but yet mixes it with the Pagan fable of *Lethe's wharf*. Whether he did it to insinuate to the zealous Protestants of *his time*, that the Pagan and Popish purgatory stood both upon the same footing of credibility, or

al cases related in modern observations. In
fer we have a good account of the various ef-
s of this root upon most of the members of a
vent in Germany, who eat of it for supper by
take, mixed with succory;—heat in the throat,
diness, dimness of sight, and delirium. *Cicut.*
atic, c. xviii. GREY.

. 29, l. 21. 22. And in the porches of mine
ears did pour

The leperous *distilment*;] So, in Painter's
ace of Pleasure, Vol. II. p. 142: "——
ch being once possessed, never leaveth the pa-
till it hath enfeebled his state, like the qua-
of poison *distilling* through the veins even
e heart. MALONE.

ely the leperous *distilment* signifies the water
ed from henbane, that subsequently occa-
leprosy. STEEVENS.

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

P. 29, l. 33. *Despatch'd, for bereft.*

WARBUR

P. 29, l. 34. *Cut off even in the blossom
my sin,]* The

words of this part of the speech are taken have been informed by a gentleman of undoubted veracity) from an old *Legend of Saints*, where a man, who was accidentally drowned, is introduced as making the same complaint. STEEVENS.

P. 29, last but one l. *Unhouse'd, disappointed, unanell'd:]*

house'd is without having received the sacrament.

Disappointed, as Dr. Johnson observes, is the same as *unappointed*, and may be properly explained *unprepared*. A man well furnished with things necessary for an enterprise, was said to be *well appointed*."

This explanation of *disappointed* may be corroborated by a quotation of Mr. Upton's from *Measure for Measure*:

"Therefore your best *appointment* is
with speed."

Isabella, as Mr. Malone remarks, is the speaker, and her brother, who was condemned to die, is the person addressed.

Unanell'd is without extreme unction.

I shall now subjoin as many notes as are necessary for the support of the first and third of the explanations. I administer the bark only, not supposing any reader will be found who is desirous to swallow the whole tree.

In the *Textus Roffensis* we meet with these words—"The monks offering themselves to perform all priestly functions of householding *aveyling*." *Aveyling* is misprinted for *avey*

See *Mort d' Arthur*, p. iii. c. 175: he was *houseled* and *aneled*, and had Christian man ought to have," &c. *Tr*

The subsequent extract from a very curious copy of Fabian's Chronicle, Pynson, 1516, seems to remove every of doubt concerning the true significant words *unhousel'd* and *unanel'd*. The speaking of Pope Innocent's having laid kingdom of England under an interdiction words: "Of the manner of this inter this lande have I seen dyverse opynyons ther be that saye that the lande was thorwly and the churchis and housys c closyd, that no where was used maie, service, by whiche reason none of the mentis all this terme should be mynys cupyed, nor chyld *crystened*, nor man nor *marryed*; but it was not so str there were dyverse placys in England, occupied with dyvyne service all th lycence purchased than or before, a were chrystenyd throughe all the la *houselyd* and *anelyd*. Fol. 14. Sept hannis."

The Anglo-Saxon noun-substantiv eucharist) and *ele* (oil) are plainly these last quoted compound adjectiv meaning of the affix *an* to the last, man's Gloss. in loco: "Quin et d adjungitur, siquidem vel *majoris* tia, vel ad *singulare aliquid*, monstrandum." Hence *anelyd* signify *oiled* or *anointed* by way e. having received extreme unctio firmation of the sense given b

strongest internal evidence in the passage. The historian is speaking of the VII sacraments, and he expressly names five of them, viz baptism, marriage, auricular confession, the *eucharist*, and *extreme unction*.

The antiquary is desired to consult the edition of Fabian, printed by Pynson, 1516, because there are others, and I remember to have seen one in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, with a continuation to the end of Queen Mary, London, 1559, in which the language is much modernized.

BRAND.

P. 30, l. 2. *O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!*] It was ingeniously hinted to me by a very learned lady, that this line seems to belong to Hamlet, in whose mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation; and who, according to the practice of the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech.

JOHNSON.

P. 30, l. 5. *A couch for luxury —*] i. e. for lewdness. STEEVENS.

P. 30, l. 12. And 'gins to *pale his uneffectual fire*:] i. e. shining without heat. WARBURTON.

To *pale* is a verb used by Lady Elizabeth Carew, in her *Tragedy of Mariam*, 1613.

Uneffectual fire, I believe, rather means, fire that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches. STEEVENS.

P. 30, l. 16. — *O fie!* —] These words (which hurt the measure, and from that circumstance, and their almost ludicrous turn, may be suspected as an interpolation,) are found only in the two earliest quartos. STEEVENS.

P. 30, l. 21. *In this distracted globe.]*
in this head confused with thought. STEEVENS

P. 30, l. 31. 32. *My tables,—meet it
set it down,*

*That one may smile, and smile, and
villain;]* This is

ridicule on the practice of the time. Hall says
his character of the *Hypocrite* "He will e
where he may be seene best, and in the mi
the sermon pulles, out his *tables* in haste,
he feared to loose that note," &c. FARMER.

No ridicule on the practice of the time
with propriety be introduced on this occasion.
let avails himself of the same caution observ
the doctor in the fifth act of *Macbeth*: "
set down whatever comes from her, to satis
remembrance the more strongly."

"Dr. Farmer's remark, however, as to th
quent use of table-books, may be support
many instances. STEEVENS.

Table-books in the time of our author
to have been used by all ranks of people.
church they were filled with short notes of th
mon, and at the theatre with the sparklin
tences of the play. MALONE.

P. 30, last l. — Now to my word;

It is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.]* H
alludes to the *watch-word* given every day i
litary service, which at this time he says is
adieu! remember me. STEEVENS.

P. 31, l. 7. *Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come,
come]* This is th
which falconers use to their hawks in the air,
they would have him come down to them.
F

P. 32, l. 6. — *by saint Patrick,*] How the poet comes to make Hamlet swear by *St. Patrick*, I know not. However, at this time all the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland; to which place it had retired, and there flourished under the auspices of this Saint. But it was, I suppose, only said at random; for he makes Hamlet a student of Wittenberg. **WARBURTON.**

Dean Swift's "Verses on the sudden drying-up of St. Patrick's Well, 1726," contain many learned allusions to the early cultivation of literature in Ireland. **NICHOLS.**

P. 32, last but one l. *Swear by my sword,*] Here the poet has preserved the manners of the ancient Danes, with whom it was *religion* to swear upon their swords. See *Bartholinus, De causis contempt. mort. apud Dan.* **WARBURTON.**

I was once inclinable to this opinion, which is likewise well defended by Mr. Upton; but Mr. Garrick produced me a passage, I think, in *Brantome*, from which it appeared, that it was common to swear upon the sword, that is, upon the cross which the old swords always had upon the hilt. **JOHNSON.**

Shakspeare, it is more than probable, knew nothing of the ancient Danes, or their manners. Every extract from Dr. Farmer's pamphlet must prove as instructive to the reader as the following:

"In the *Passus Primus* of *Pierce Plowman*,

'David in his daies dubbed knightes,

'And did them swere on her sword to
serve truth ever.'

"And in *Hieronymo* the common butt of our
'bor, and the wits of the time, says Lorenzo
ringano:

'Swear on this *cross*, that 'what thou say'st is true:

'But if I prove thee perjur'd and unjust,

'This very *sword*, whereon thou took'st thine oath,

'Shall be a worker of thy tragedy."

To the authorities produced by Dr. Farmer, the following amongst many others, may be added from *Holinshed*, p. 664: "Warwick kissed the cross of K. Edward's sword, as it were a vow to his promise."

Again in an ancient MS. of which some account is given in a note on the first scene of the first act of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the oath taken by a *master of defence* when his degree was conferred on him, is preserved, and runs as follows: "First you shall swear (so help you God and haildome, and by all the christendome which God gave you at the fount-stone, and by the *crosse of this sword which doth represent unto you the crosse which our Saviour sufered his most payneful death upon*;) that you shal upholde, maynteyne, and kepe to your power all soch articles as shall be heare declared unto you, and receve in the presence of me your maister, and these the rest of the maisters my bretheren heare with me at this tyme." STEVENS.

Spencer observes that the Irish in his time used commonly to swear by their sword. See his *View of the State of Ireland*, written in 1596. This custom, indeed, is of the highest antiquity; having prevailed as we learn from Lucian, among the *Scythians*. MALONE.

P. 53, l. 14. 15. And therefore as a stranger
give it welcome.] i. e.
receive it to yourselves; take it under your own

roof; as much as to say, *Keep it secret*. Alluding to the laws of hospitality. **WARBURTON.**

Warburton refines too much on this passage. Hamlet means merely to request that they would seem not to know it—to be unacquainted with it.

M. MASON.

P. 33, l. 30. 31. Or *such ambiguous giving out*, to note

That you know aught of me:] The construction is irregular and elleptical. Swear as before, says Hamlet, that you never *shall* by folded arms or shaking of your head *intimate that a secret is lodged in your breasts*; and by no ambiguous phrases denote that you know aught of me.

Shakspeare has in many other places begun to construct a sentence in one form, and ended it in another. So, in *All's well that ends well*: "I would the cutting of my garments would serve the turn, or the baring of my beard; and *to say it was in stratagem*."

Having used the word *never* in the preceding part of the sentence, [that you *never* shall—] the poet considered the *negative* implied in what follows; and hence he wrote—"or—to note," instead of *nor*. **MALONE.**

P. 33, l. 34. Ham. *Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!* &c.] The skill

displayed in Shakspeare's management of his Ghost, is too considerable to be overlooked. He has rivetted our attention to it by a succession of forcible circumstances:—by the previous report of the terrified sentinels,—by the solemnity of the hour at which the phantom walks,—by its martial *stride* and discriminating armour, visible only *per incertam lunam*, by the glimpses of the moon,—by its long taciturnity,—by its prepa-

ration to speak, when interrupted by the *morning* cock, — by its mysterious reserve throughout ~~the~~ first scene with Hamlet, — by his resolute departure with it, and the subsequent anxiety of his attendants, — by its conducting him to a solitary angle of the platform, — by its voice from beneath the earth, — and by its unexpected burst on us in the closet.

Hamlet's late interview with the spectre, must in particular be regarded as a stroke of dramatick artifice. The phantom might have told his story in the presence of the officers and Horatio, and yet have rendered itself as inaudible to them, as afterwards to the Queen. But suspense was our poet's object; and never was it more effectually created, than in the present instance. Six times has the royal semblance appeared, but till now has been withheld from speaking. For this event we have waited with impatient curiosity, unaccompanied by lassitude, or remitted attention.

The Ghost in this tragedy, is allowed to be the genuine product of Shakspeare's strong imagination. When he afterwards avails himself of traditional phantoms, as in *Julius Caesar*, and *King Richard III.* they are but inefficacious pageants; nay, the apparition of Banquo is a mute exhibitor. Perhaps our poet despaired to equal the vigour of his early conceptions on the subject of preternatural beings, and therefore allotted them no further eminence in his dramas; or was unwilling to diminish the power of his principal shade, by an injudicious repetition of congenial images. STEEVENS.

P. 34, l. 22. Inquire me first what *Danskers* are in Paris;] *Danske* (in Warner's *Albion's England*) is the ancient name of Denmark. STEEVENS.

P. 35, l. 14-16. *Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling, Drabbing:*] I suppose, by *fencing* is meant a too diligent frequentation of the fencing-school, a resort of violent and lawless young men.

JOHNSON.

Fencing, I suppose, means, piquing himself on his skill in the use of the sword, and quarrelling and brawling in consequence of that skill.

MALONE.

P. 35, l. 20. *You must not put another scandal on him,*] Thus the old editions. Mr. Theobald reads, — *an utter*.

JOHNSON.

i. e. a very different and more scandalous failing, namely, habitual incontinency. Mr. Theobald in his *Shakspeare Restored* proposed to read — *an utter scandal on him*; but did not admit the emendation into his edition. MALONE.

P. 35, l. 22. *That's not my meaning:*] That is not what I mean, when I permit you to accuse him of drabbing. M. MASON.

P. 35, l. 26. *Savageness, for wildness.*

WARBURTON.

P. 35, l. 27. *Of general assault.*] i. e. such as youth in general is liable to. WARBURTON.

P. 36, l. 2. — *prenominate crimes,*] i. e. crimes already named. STREVENs.

P. 36, l. 5. *Good sir, or so; or friend, or gentleman,*] I suspect, (with Mr. Tyrwhitt,) that the poet wrote — *Good sir, or sir, or friend, &c.* In the last act of this play, *so* is used for so forth: — *six French rap-piers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hanger, and so.* MALONE.

P. 36. l. 33. *Observe his inclination in your self.*] Sir T. Hanmer reads; — *even* yourself, and is followed by Dr. Warburton; but perhaps *in* yourself means, *in your own person*, not by spies. JOHNSON.

The meaning seems to be — The temptation you feel, suspect in him, and be watchful of then. So, in a subsequent scene:

“For by the image of my cause, I see
“The portraiture of his.”

Again, in *Timon*:

“I weigh my friend’s affection with my own.” C.

P. 37, l. 10. — *down-gyved* to his ankle. *Down-gyved* means hanging down like the loop-cincture which confines the fetters round the ankle.

STEEVEN

P. 37, l. 28. — *all his bulk*,] i. e. all his body. MALON.

P. 38, l. 2. *Whose violent property fordo itself*,] To foredo, to destroy. STEEVENS.

P. 38, l. 14. *I had not quoted him*:] The *quote* is, I believe, to *reckon*, to take an account of, to take the *quotient* or result of a computation. JOHNSON.

I find a passage in *The Isle of Gulls*, a comedy by John Day, 1606, which proves Dr. Johnson’s sense of the word to be not far from the true one.

“—— ’twill be a scene of mirth

“For me to *quote* his passions, and I smile.”

To *quote* on this occasion undoubtedly means to *observe*.

Again, in the *The Woman Hater*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, the intelligencer says, — “I’ll q

him to a tittle," i. e. I will mark or observe him.

To quote as Mr. M. Mason observes, is invariably used by Shakspeare in this sense.

STEEVENS.

P. 38, l. 17-20. — *it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion.*]

This is not the remark of a weak man. The vice of age is too much suspicion. Men long accustomed to the wiles of life cast commonly *beyond themselves*, let their cunning go farther than reason can attend it. This is always the fault of a little mind, made artful by long commerce with the world. JOHNSON.

P. 38, l. 21-23. *This must be known; which,
being kept close might move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.*]

This must be made known to the King, for (being kept secret) the hiding Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the Queen, than the uttering or revealing of it will occasion hate and resentment from Hamlet. The poet's ill and obscure expression seems to have been caused by his affectation of concluding the scene with a couplet.

Sir T. Hamner reads,

More grief to hide hate, than to utter love,
JOHNSON.

P. 39, l. 24. *Gentry, for complaisance.*

WARBURTON.

P. 39, l. 26. *For the supply and profit of
our hope,]* That the

hope which your arrival has raised may be completed by the desired effect. JOHNSON.

P. 39, l. 30. — *by the sovereign power you have of us,*] I believe we should read — *o'er us*, instead of — *of us*.

M. MASON.

P. 39, l. 34. — *in the full bent,*] *Bent*, for *endeavour, application*. WARBURTON.

The full bent, is the utmost extremity of exertion. The allusion is to a bow bent as far as it will go. MALONE.

P. 40, l. 24. 25. — *this brain of mine*

Hunts not the trail of policy] The trail is the course of an animal pursued by the scent.

JOHNSON.

P. 40, l. 30. — *the fruit* —] The *desert* after the meat. JOHNSON.

P. 41, l. 17. — *falsely borne in hand,*] i. e. deceived, imposed on. STEEVENS.

P. 41, l. 20. 21. — *never more*

To give the assay of arms against your Majesty.] *To take the assay* was a technical expression, originally applied to those who tasted wine for Princes and great men. MALONE.

P. 41, l. 23. Gives him *three thousand crowns in annual fee*;) This reading first obtained in the edition put out by the players. But all the old quartos (from 1605, downwards,) read *threescore*. THEOBALD.

The metre is destroyed by the alteration; and *threescore thousand crowns*, in the days of Hamlet, was an enormous sum of money. M. MASON.

Fee in this place signifies *reward, recompence*. The word is commonly used in Scotland, for *wages*, as we say *lawyer's fee*, *physician's fee*.

STEEVENS.

PRINCE OF DENMARK. 205

Fee is defined by Minshew in his Dict. 1617, a reward. MALONE.

I have restored the reading of the folio. Mr. Ritson explains it, I think, rightly thus: the King gave his nephew a *feud* or *fee* (in land) of that yearly value. REED.

P. 42, l. 3. — *at night we'll feast together.*] The King's intemperance is never suffered to be forgotten. JOHNSON.

P. 42, l. 6. and fol. Pol. *This business is well ended.*

My Liege, and Madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, &c.] *To expostulate*, for *to enquire or discuss*.

The strokes of humour in this speech are admirable. Polonius's character is that of a weak, pendent, minister of state. His declamation is a fine satire on the impertinent oratory then in vogue, which placed reason in the formality of method, and wit in the gingle and play of words. With what art is he made to pride himself in his *wit*:

"That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity:

"And pity 'tis, 'tis true: A foolish figure;

"But farewell it, —"

And how exquisitely does the poet ridicule the *reasoning in fashion*, where he makes Polonius remark on Hamlet's madness:

"Though this be madness, yet there's method in't:"

As if method, which the wits of that age thought the most essential quality of a good discourse, would make amends for the madness. It was *madness* indeed, yet Polonius could comfort himself with this reflection, that at least it was *method*. It is certain Shakspeare excels in nothing more

than in the preservation of his characters; *To this life and variety of character* (says our great poet [Pope] in his admirable preface to Shakspeare) *we must add the wonderful preservation.* We have said what is the character of Polonius; and it is allowed on all hands to be drawn with wonderful life and spirit, yet the *unity* of it has been thought by some to be grossly violated in the excellent *precepts and instructions* which Shakspeare makes his statesman give his son and servant in the middle of the *first*, and beginning of the *second act*. But I will venture to say, these criticks have not entered into the poet's art and address in this particular. He had a mind to ornament his scenes with those fine lessons of social life; but his Polonius was too weak to be author of them, though he was pedant enough to have met with them in his reading, and sop enough to get them by heart, and retail them for his own. And this the poet has finely shewn us was the case, where, in the middle of Polonius's instructions to his servant, he makes him, though without having received any interruption, forget his lesson. and say,

"And then, Sir, does he this;

"He does—What was I about to say?

"I was about to say something—where did I leave?"

The servant replies,

At, closes in the consequence. This sets Polonius right, and he goes on,

"*At* closes in the consequence.

"—*Av marry,*

"*He closes thus:—* I know the gentleman," &c.

which shews the very words got by heart which he was repeating. Otherwise closes in the c

sequence, which conveys no particular idea of the subject he was upon, could never have made him recollect where he broke off. This is an extraordinary instance of the poet's art, and attention to the preservation of character. WARBURTON.

This account of the character of Polonius, though it sufficiently reconciles the seeming inconsistency of so much wisdom with so much folly, does not perhaps correspond exactly to the ideas of our author. The commentator makes the character of Polonius, a character only of manners, discriminated by properties superficial, accidental, and acquired. The poet intended a nobler delineation of a mixed character of manners and nature. Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man cels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon memory, and can draw from his repositories knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, an old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas and enters himself in his own thoughts, till he recollects his leading principle, and falls again into his

former train. This idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom, will solve all the phaenomena of the character of Polonius. JOHNSON.

Nothing can be more just, judicious, and masterly, than Johnson's delineation of the character of Polonius; and I cannot read it without heartily regretting that he did not exert his great abilities and discriminating powers, in delineating the strange, inconsistent, and indecisive character of Hamlet, to which I confess myself unequal.

M. MASON.

P. 42, l. 33. The most *beautified* Ophelia,] Mr. Theobald for *beautified* substituted *beatified*.

MALONE.

Dr. Warburton has followed Mr. Theobald; but I am in doubt whether *beautified*, though, as Polonius calls it, a *vile phrase*, be not the proper word. *Beautified* seems to be a *vile phrase*, for the ambiguity of its meaning. JOHNSON.

Heywood, in his *History of Edward VI.* says "*Katherine Parre, Queen dowager to King Henry VIII. was a woman beautified with many excellent virtues.*" FARMER.

By *beautified* Hamlet means *beautiful*. But Polonius, taking the word in the more strictly grammatical sense of *being made beautiful*, calls it a vile phrase, as implying that his daughter's beauty was the effect of art. M. MASON.

P. 43, l. 14. — *whilst this machine is to him,*] These words will not be ill explained by the conclusion of one of the *Letters of the Paston Family*, Vol. II. p. 43: "— for your pleasure, *whylo my wyttys be my owne.*"

The phrase employed by Hamlet seems to have a French construction. *Pendant que cette machine est à lui.* To be one's own man is a vul

gar expression, but means much the same as Virgil's

Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus. STEEVENS.

P. 43, l. 16. — *more above,*] is, moreover, besides. JOHNSON.

P. 43, l. 29-32. *If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;*

Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;

Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;

What might you think?] If either I had conveyed intelligence between them, and been the confident of their amours [*play'd the desk or table-book,*] or had connived at it, only observed them in secret, without acquainting my daughter with my discovery [*giving my heart a mute and dumb working;*] or lastly, had been negligent in observing the intrigue, and overlooked it [*looked upon this love with idle sight;*] what would you have thought of me? WARBURTON.

I doubt whether the first line is rightly explained. It may mean, if I had lock'd up this secret in my own breast, as closely as if it were confined in a desk or table-book. MALONE.

P. 43, l. 32. — *I went round to work,*] i. e. roundly, without reserve. STEEVENS.

P. 44, l. 4. — *she took the fruits of my advice;*] She took the fruits of advice when she obeyed advice, the advice was then made fruitful. JOHNSON.

P. 44, l. 5-10. *And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make,)*

Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;

Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;

Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declension,

Into the madness wherein now he raves,

And all we mourn for.] The ridicule of this character is here admirably sustained. He would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done; when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humour of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find

"Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed

"Within the centre." WARBURTON.

P. 44, l. 24. 25. — *sometimes he walks four hours together,]* Perhaps it would be better were we to read indefinitely,

—for *hours together.* TYRWHITT.

I formerly was inclined to adopt Mr. Tyrwhitt's proposed emendation; but have now no doubt that the text is right. The expression, *four hours together, two hours together, &c.* appears to have been common. MALONE.

P. 45, l. 5. *I'll board him]* i. e. accost, address him. REED.

P. 45, l. 18. 19. Ham. *For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion—]* Old copies—a good kissing carrion. The editors seeing Hamlet counterfeit madness, thought they might safely put any nonsense into his mouth. But this strange passage, when set right, will be seen to contain as great and sublime a reflection as any the poet puts into his
here

hero's mouth throughout the whole play. We will first give the true reading, which is this: *For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion, —*. As to the sense we may observe, that the illative particle [for] shows the speaker to be reasoning from something he had said before: what that was we learn in these words, *to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand.* Having said this, the chain of ideas led him to reflect upon the argument which libertines bring against Providence from the circumstance of abounding evil. In the next speech therefore he endeavours to answer that objection, and vindicate Providence, even on a supposition of the fact, that almost all men were wicked. His argument in the two lines in question is to this purpose, — *But why need we wonder at this abounding of evil? For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, which though a god, yet shedding its heat and influence upon carrion* — Here he stops short, lest talking too consequentially the hearer should suspect his madness to be feigned; and so turns him off from the subject, by enquiring of his daughter. But the inference which he intended to make, was a very noble one, and to this purpose. If this, (says he) be the case, that the effect follows the thing operated upon [carrion] and not the thing operating [a god,] why need we wonder, that the supreme cause of all shings diffusing its blessings on mankind, who is, as it were, a dead carrion, dead in original sin, man, instead of a proper return of duty, should breed only corruption and vices? This is the argument at length; and is as noble a one in behalf of Providence as could come from the schools of divinity. But this wonderful man

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had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but with what they *think*. The sentiment too is altogether in character, for Hamlet is perpetually moralizing, and circumstances make this reflection very apt. The same *thought*, something diversified, on a different occasion, he uses again in *Measure*, which will serve to confirm the observations:

"The tempter or the tempted, who sins

"Not she; nor doth she tempt; but it

"That lying by the violet in the sun,

"Do as the carrion does, not as the

"Corrupt by virtuous season."

And the same kind of *expression* is in *Cymbeline*—"Common-kissing Titan." WARBURTON

This is a noble emendation, which also is the critick on a level with the author. JOHNSON

Dr. Warburton, in my apprehension, does not understand the passage. I have therefore added his laboured comment on it, in which he endeavours to prove that Shakspeare intended a vindication of the ways of Providence in permitting evil to abound in the world. He does not indeed pretend that this profound meaning is drawn from what Hamlet *says*; but that what he was *thinking of*; for "this woman (Shakspeare) had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his act was, but with what they *think*!"

Hamlet's observation is, I think, simple.

He has just remarked that honesty is very rare in the world. To this Polonius assents. He then adds, that since there is so little virtue in the world, since corruption abounds every where, maggots are bred by the sun, even in a

Polonius ought to take care to prevent his daughter from walking in the sun, lest she should prove "a breeder of sinners;" for though *conception* in general be a blessing, yet as Ophelia (whom Hamlet supposes to be as frail as the rest of the world,) might chance to *conceive*, it might be a calamity. The maggots *breeding* in a dead dog, seem to have been mentioned merely to introduce the word *conception*; on which word, as Mr. Steevens has observed, Shakspeare has played in *King Lear*: and probably a similar quibble was intended here. The word, however, may have been used in its ordinary sense, for *pregnancy*, without any double meaning.

The slight connection between this and the preceding passage, and Hamlet's abrupt question, — *Have you a daughter?* were manifestly intended more strongly to impress Polonius with the belief of the Prince's madness.

Perhaps this passage ought rather to be regulated thus: — "being a *god-kissing carrion*;" i. e. a carrion that kisses the sun. The participle *being* naturally refers to the last antecedent, *dog*. Had Shakspeare intended that it should be referred to *sun*, he would probably have written — "*he being a god*," &c. We have many similar compound epithets in these plays.

However, the instance quoted from *Cymbeline* by Dr. Warburton, "— *common-kissing Titan*," seems in favour of the regulation that has been hitherto made; for here we find the poet considered the sun as kissing the carrion, not the carrion as kissing the sun.

In justice to Dr. Johnson, I should add, that the high eulogium which he has pronounced on Dr.

Warburton's emendation, was founded on *comment* which accompanied it; of which, however, I think, his judgement must have demned the reasoning, though his goodness piety approved its moral tendency. MALONE.

As a doubt, at least, may be entertained on subject, I have not ventured to expunge a written by a great critick, and applauded greater. STEEVENS.

P. 45, l. 22-24. — *conception is a blessing but as your daughter may conceive, — friend look to't.*] Thus the quarto. The folio thus: "— *conception is a blessing; but not your daughter may conceive. Friend look to't.*" The meaning seems to be, *conception* (i. e. understanding) is a blessing; but as your daughter may *conceive* (i. e. be pregnant,) *friend look to't* i. e. have a care of that. STEEVENS.

P. 46, l. 3-8. — *the satirical rogue says that old men have grey beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick and plum-tree gum; and that they have a pitiful lack of wit, together with most of the hams:]* By the *satirical rogue* he means Juvenal in his 10th Satire. Nothing could be finer imagined for Hamlet, in his circumstances, than bringing him in reading a description of the effects of long life. WARBURTON.

Had Shakspeare read *Juvenal* in the original had met with

"De temone Britanno, Excidet Arviragus and

"— *Uxorem, Posthume, ducis?*"

We should not then have had continually in *Beline*, *Arviragus*, and *Posthumus*. Should we said that the quantity in the former word

be forgotten, it is clear from the mistake in the latter, that Shakspeare could not possibly have read any one of the Roman poets.

There was a translation of the 10th Satire of *Juvenal* by Sir John Beaumont, the elder brother of the famous Francis: but I cannot tell whether it was printed in Shakspeare's time. In that age of quotation, every classick might be picked up by *piece-meal*.

I forgot to mention in its proper place, that another description of *Old Age* in *As you like it*, has been called a parody on a passage in a French poem of Garnier. It is trifling to say any thing about this, after the observation I made in *Macbeth*: but one may remark once for all, that Shakspeare wrote for the *people*; and could not have been so absurd as to bring forward any allusion, which had not been familiarized by some accident or other. FARMER.

P. 46, l. 17. 18. *How pregnant sometimes his replies are!* *Pregnant* is ready, dexterous, apt.

STEEVENS.

P. 46, l. 30. ROSENCRANTZ.] There was an ambassador of that name in England about the time when this play was written. STEEVENS.

P. 47, l. 18—last l. & P. 48, l. 1-16. All within the crotchets is wanting in the quartos.

STEEVENS.

P. 48, l. 2. 3. — the very substance of the ambitious is merely the *shadow of a dream*.] Shakspeare has accidentally inverted an expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is *σνίας ὄναρ*, the dream of a shadow. JOHNSON.

P. 48, l. 8-10. Then are our beggars, bodies; and our monarchs, and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows:] Shakspeare seems

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here to design a ridicule of those declamations against wealth and greatness, that seem to make happiness consist in poverty. JOHNSON.

P. 48, l. 21. — *my thanks are too dear, a half-penny.*] i. e. a half-penny too dear: they are worth nothing. The modern editors read — at a half-penny. MALONE.

P. 49, l. 4. — *I have an eye of you;*] An eye of you means, I have a glimpse of your meaning.

P. 49, l. 9. & fol. *I have of late, &c.*] This is an admirable description of a rooted melancholy sprung from thickness of blood; and artfully imagined to hide the true cause of his disorder from the penetration of these two friends, who were over him as spies. WARBURTON.

P. 49, l. 32. — *lenten entertainment* —] i. e. sparing, like the entertainments given in Lent.

P. 49, l. 33. — *we coted them on the* u To cote is to overtake.

In the laws of coursing, says Mr. Tollet, "it is when a greyhound goes endways by the side of his fellow, and gives the hare a turn." The verb seems to point out the etymology, the side verb to be from the French *côté*, the side.

P. 50, l. 4. — *the humorous man* his part in peace:] After these words adds — *the clown shall make those la-*

P. 50, l. 4. 5. — *the clown shall laugh, whose lungs are tickled o'the* those who are asthmatical, and to whom is most uneasy. This is the case with those whose lungs are tickled;

serum: but about these words I am neither very confident, nor very solicitous. STEEVENS.

These words are not in the quarto. I am by no means satisfied with the explanation given; though I have nothing satisfactory to propose. I believe Hamlet only means, that the clown shall make those laugh who have a disposition to laugh; who are pleased with their entertainment. That no asthmatick disease was in contemplation, may be inferred from both the words used, *tickled* and *lungs*, each of which seems to have a relation to laughter, and the latter to have been considered by Shakspeare, as (if I may so express myself,) its natural seat.

O'the sere, or of *the sere*, means, I think, by the sere; but the word *sere* I am unable to explain, and suspect it to be corrupt. Perhaps we should read — *the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o'the scene*, i. e. by the scene. MALONE.

P. 50, l. 6. 7. — *and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.*] The lady shall have no obstruction, unless from the lameness of the verse. JOHNSON.

I think, the meaning is, — The lady shall mark the measure of the verse, rather than not express herself freely or fully. HENDERSON.

P. 50, l. 11. — *they travel?*] To *travel*, in Shakspeare's time was the technical word, for which we have substituted to *stroll*. So, in the Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to King Charles the First, a manuscript of which an account is given in Vol. II: "1622. Feb. 27, for a certificate for the Palgrave's servants to *travel* into the country for six weeks, 10s." Again, in Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, 1601: "If he pen for

thee once, thou shalt not need to *travell* thy pumps full of gravell, any more, after a jade and a hamper, and stalk upon bod-barrel-heads to an old crackt trumpet."

words are addressed to a player. MALON

P. 50, l. 14. 15. I think, their *inhibition* by the means of the late *innovation*.]

this is transposed: Hamlet enquires not at *inhibition*, but an *innovation*; the answer probably was, — *I think, their inn* that is, their new practice of strolling, *co* means of the late inhibition. JOHNSON.

The drift of Hamlet's question appears this, — How chances it they travel? — i. *happens it that they are become strol* Their residence, both in reputation and pro better both ways. — i. e. *to have remain* settled theatre, was the more honourable as the more lucrative situation. To this, crantz replies, — Their *inhibition* comes h of the late *innovation*. — i. e. *their permi* act any longer at an established house away, in consequence of the NEW CUSTOM introducing personal abuse into their co Several companies of actors in the time of thior were silenced on account of this li practice.

Alteration therefore in the order of th seem so be quite unnecessary. STEEVENS.

There will still, however, remain some culty. The statute 39 Eliz. ch. 4. which he alluded to by the words — *their ind* was not made to inhibit the players from any longer at an established theatre, but inhibit them from strolling. "All fences the act,) bearwards, common player

ludes, and minstrels, *wandering abroad*, (other than players of enterludes, belonging to any baron of this realm or any other honourable personage of greater degree, to be authorized to play under the hand and seal of arms of such baron or personage,) shall be taken, adjudged, and deemed, rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and shall sustain such pain and punishments as by this act is in that behalf appointed."

This statute, if alluded to, is repugnant to Dr. Johnson's transposition of the text, and to Mr. Steevens's explanation of it as it now stands. Yet Mr. Steevens's explanation may be right: Shakspeare might not have thought of the act of Elizabeth. He could not, however, mean to charge his friends the *old tragedians* with the *new custom* of introducing personal abuse; but must rather have meant, that the old tragedians were inhibited from performing in the city, and obliged to travel, on account of the misconduct of the younger company. See n. 6. MALONE.

By the late *innovation*, it is probable that Rosencrantz means the late change of government.

M. MASON.

P. 50, l. 19. [*Ham. How comes it? &c.*] The lines enclosed in crotchets are in the folio of 1623, but not in any of the quartos. JOHNSON.

P. 50. l. 21. — an aiery of *children*.] Relating to the play-houses then contending, the *Bankside*, the *Fortune*, &c. played by the children of his Majesty's chapel. POPE.

It relates to the young singing men of the chapel royal, or St. Paul's, of the former of whom perhaps the earliest mention occurs in an anonymous puritanical pamphlet, 1569, entitled *The Children of the Chapel stript and whipt*: "Plains will

nener be supprest, while her maiesties unminions flaunt it in silkes and sattens. T as well be at their popish service in the demment's," &c.

Concerning the performances and success latter in attracting the best company, I a the following passage in *Jack Drum's Entertainment, or Pasquil and Katherine*, 1601 :

"I saw the *children of Powles* last n

"And troth they pleas'd me pretty,
well,

"The apes, in time, will do it hand

"— I like the audience that frequen

"With *much applause*: a man shall
choak'd

"With the stench of garlick, nor be

"To the barmy jacket of a beer-brew

"— 'Tis a good *gentle audience*," &

It is said in Richard Flecknoe's *Short Description of the English Stage*, 1664, that, "the children of the chappel and St. Paul's, acted the one in White-Friers, the other behi Convocation-house in Paul's; till people more precise, and playes more licentious theatre of Paul's was quite supprest, and the children of the chappel converted to the children of the revels." STEEVENS.

The suppression to which Flecknoe allude place in the year 1583-4; but afterwards the children of the chapel and of the Revels played our author's playhouse in Blackfriars, at where: and the choir-boys of St. Paul's own house. See *the Account of our old Theatre in Vol. II.* A certain number of the children of the Revels, I believe, belonged to each principal theatres.

Our author cannot be supposed to direct any satire at those young men who played occasionally at his own theatre. Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, and his *Poetaster*, were performed there by the children of Queen Elizabeth's chapel, in 1600 and 1601; and *Eastward Hoe* by the children of the revels, in 1604 or 1605. I have no doubt therefore that the dialogue before us was pointed at the choir-boys of St. Paul's, who in 1601 acted two of Marston's plays, *Antonio and Mellida*, and *Antonio's Revenge*. Many of Lyly's plays were represented by them about the same time; and in 1607 Chapman's *Bussy's Ambois* was performed by them with great applause. It was probably in this and some other noisy tragedies of the same kind, that they cry'd out on the top of question, and were most tyrannically clapp'd for't.

At a later period indeed, after our poet's death, the *Children of the Revels* had an established theatre of their own, and some dispute seems to have arisen between them and the King's company. They performed regularly in 1623, and for eight years afterwards, at the Red Bull in St. John's street; and in 1627, Shakspeare's company obtained an inhibition from the Master of the Revels to prevent their performing any of his plays at their house: as appears from the following entry in Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book, already mentioned: "From Mr. Heminge, in their company's name, to forbid the playinge of any of Shakspeare's playes to the Red-Bull company, this 11th of Aprill, 1627,—5 o o." From other passages in the same book, it appears that the Children of the Revels composed the Red Bull company.

We learn from Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, that the little cyases here mentioned were the

persons who were guilty of the *late innovation* or practice of introducing personal abuse on stage, and perhaps for their particular fault players in general suffered; and the older and more decent comedians, as well as the children, had some recent occasion been *inhibited* from acting in London, and compelled to turn strollers. This supposition will make the words concerning what a difficulty has been stated, (see p. 387, n. 5.) perfectly clear. Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, published in 1612; the passage therefore which is found in the folio, and not in the quarto, probably added not very long before that time.

"Now to speake (says Heywood,) of some abominably crept into the quality, as an *inveigh against the state, the court, the law, the cities and their governments, with the particularizing of private mens humours, yet alive, nobles and others*, I know it distastes many: neither I any way approve it, nor dare I by any means excuse it. The liberty which some arrogate themselves, committing their bitterness and libelous invectives against all estates *to the mouths of children*, supposing their juniority to be a privilege for any railing, be it never so violent, could advise all such to curbe, and limit their presumed liberty within the bands of discretion and government. But wise and judicial censure before whom such complaints shall at any time hereafter come, will not, I hope, impute the abuses to any transgression in us, who have been careful and provident to shun the like."

Prynne in his *Histriomastix*, speaking of the state of the stage, about the year 1620, has the following passage: "Not to particularise those late scandalous invective playes, where in sundry

sons of place and eminence [Gundemore, the late lord admiral, lord treasurer, and others,] have been particularly personated, jeered, abused in a gross and scurrilous manner," &c.

Since this note was written, I have met with a passage in a letter from Mr. Samuel Calvert to Mr. Winwood, dated March 28, 1605, which might lead us to suppose that the words found only in the folio were added at that time:

"The plays do not forbear to present upon the stage the whole course of this present time, not sparing the King, state, or religion, in so great absurdity, and with such liberty, that any would be afraid to hear them." *Memorials*, Vol. II. p. 54. MALONE,

P. 50, l. 22. Little *eyases*;] i. e. young nestlings, creatures just out of the egg. THEOBALD.

The Book of Hawkyng, &c. bl. 1. no date, seems to offer another etymology. "And so by-cause the best knowledge is by the *eye*, they be called *eyessed*. Ye may also know an *eyesse* by the paleness of the seres of her legges, or the sere over the beake." STEEVENS.

From *ey*, Tent. ovum, q. d. qui recens ex ovo emersit. Skinner, Etymol. An *aiery* or *eyrie*, as it ought rather to be written, is derived from the same root, and signifies both a young brood of hawks, and the nest itself in which they are produced.

An *eyas* hawk is sometimes written a *nyas* hawk, perhaps from a corruption that has happened in many words in our language, from the latter *n* passing from the end of one word to the beginning of another. However, some etymologists think *nyas* a legitimate word. MALONE.

P. 50, l. 22. — *that cry out on the top of question,*] The meaning seems to be, they ask a common question in the highest note of the voice.

JOHNSON.

I believe *question* in this place, as in many others, signifies *conversation, dialogue*. The meaning of the passage may therefore be — *Children that perpetually recite in the highest notes of voice that can be uttered*. STEEVENS.

When we ask a *question*, we generally end the sentence with a high note. I believe, therefore, that what Rosencrantz means to say is, that these children declaim, through the whole of their parts, in the high note commonly used *at the end of a question*, and are applauded for it. M. MASON.

P. 50, l. 29. — *escoted?*] Paid. From the French *escot*, a shot or reckoning. JOHNSON.

P. 50, l. 29. 30. *Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing?*] Will they follow the *profession* of players no longer than they keep the voices of boys, and sing in the choir? So afterwards he says to the player, *Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech*. JOHNSON.

"Than they can *sing*," does not merely mean, "than they keep the voices of boys," but is to be understood literally. He is speaking of the choir boys of St. Paul's. MALONE.

P. 50, l. 33. — *their writers do them wrong,*] I should have been very much surprised if I had not found Ben Jonson among the writers here alluded to. STEEVENS.

P. 51, first l. — *to tarre them on to controversy.*] To provoke any animal to rage, is to *tarre him*. The word is said to come from the Greek *ταρώσσω*. JOHNSON.

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P. 51, l. 9. 10. *Hercules and his load too*] i. e. they not only carry away the world, but the world-bearer too: alluding to the story of Hercules's relieving Atlas. This is humorous.

WARBURTON.

The allusion may be to the *Globe* playhouse on the Bankside, the sign of which was *Hercules carrying the Globe*. STEEVENS.

I suppose Shakspeare meant, that the boys drew greater audiences than the elder players of the *Globe* theatre. MALONE.

P. 51, l. 11. 12. *It is not very strange: for my uncle is King of Denmark;*] I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation, my uncle supplies another example of the facility with which honour is conferred upon new claimants. JOHNSON.

It is not very strange: &c. was originally Hamlet's observation, on being informed that the old tragedians of the city were not so followed as they used to be: but Dr. Johnson's explanation is certainly just, and this passage connects sufficiently well with that which now immediately precedes it.

MALONE.

P. 51, l. 15. — *in little.*] i. e. in miniature.

STEEVENS.

P. 51, l. 21. 22. — *let me comply with you in this garb;*] Sir T. Hamner reads, — *let me compliment with you.* JOHNSON.

To *comply* is again apparently used in the sense of—to *compliment*, in Act V: "He did *comply* with his dug, before he suck'd it." STEEVENS.

P. 51, l. 29. 30. *I know a hawk from a handsaw.*] This was a common proverbial speech. The Oxford editor alters it to, — *I know a hawk from an hernshaw*, as if the other had been a cor-

ruption of the players; whereas the poet has corrupted the proverb thus corrupted in the mouth of the people: so that the critick's alteration only serves to shew us the original of the expression.

WA

Similarity of sound is the source of many corruptions. In Holborn we have the sign of the *Bull and Gate*, which exhibits an old combination of images. It was originally the *Boulogne Gate*, i. e. one of the gates of *Boulogne*; designed perhaps as a compliment to the *Vill.* who took the place in 1544.

The *Boulogne mouth*, now the *Bull and Gate*, had probably the same origin, i. e. the *mouth of the Harbour of Boulogne*. STEEVENS.

The *Boulogne Gate* was not one of the gates of *Boulogne*, but of *Calais*; and is frequently mentioned as such by Hall and Holinshed.

P. 52, l. 10. *Buz, buz!*] Mere idle talk, *buz* of the vulgar. JOHNSON.

Buz, buz! are, I believe, only interjections employed to interrupt *Polonius*. Ben Jonson uses them often for the same purpose, as well as *Hamlet*. STEEVENS.

Buz used to be an interjection at Oxford, when any one began a story that was generally false. BLACKSTONE.

Buzzer, in a subsequent scene in this play, is used for a *busy talker*. It is, therefore, derived from the answer of *Polonius*, that *buz* was, as Dr. Johnson supposes, for an idle rumour, or without any foundation.

In Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*, the office of mercantile intelligence is called *Emia*.

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

Whatever may be the origin of this phrase, rather of this interjection, it is not unusual, e at this day, to cry *buz* to any person who beg to relate what the company had heard before.

M. MASO

P. 52, l. 12. *Then came each actor on his ass, —*] This seems to be a line of a ballad. JOHNSON.

P. 52, l. 17. 18. *Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.*] The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Thomas Newton, and others, and published first separate, at different times, and afterwards all together in 1581. One comedy of Plautus, viz. the *Menaechmi*, was likewise translated and published in 1595.

STEEVENS.

I believe the frequency of plays performed at public schools, suggested to Shakspeare the names of *Seneca* and *Plautus* as dramatick authors.

T. WARTON.

P. 52, l. 18. 19. *For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.*] All the modern editions have, — *the law of wit, and the liberty*; but both my old copies have — *the law of writ*, I believe rightly. *Writ*, for *writing*, *composition*. It was not, in our author's time, taken either for *imagination*, or *acuteness*, or *both together*, for *understanding*. for the faculty by which *apprehend* and *judge*. Those who wrote of human mind, distinguished its primary powers *wit* and *will*. Ascham distinguishes *boys* of *and* of active faculties into *quick wits* and *wits*. JOHNSON.

That *writ* is here used for *writing*, may be proved by the following passage in *Titus Andronicus*:

VL. XVII.

"Then all too late I bring this fatal *writ*."

STEEVENS.

The old copies are certainly right. *Writ* is used for *writing* by authors contemporary with Shakespeare. MALONE.

P. 52, l. 32. *As by lot, God wot, — It came to pass, As most like it was, —*] The old song from which these quotations are taken, & communicated to Dr. Percy, who has honoured it with a place in the second and third editions of his *Reliques of ancient English Poetry*. This story was also one of the favourite subjects of ancient tapestry.

STEEVENS.

There is a Latin tragedy on the subject of *Jephtha*, by John Christopherson in 1546, and another by Buchanan, in 1554. A third by Du Plessis Mor-nay is mentioned by Prynne in his *Histriomastix*. The same subject had probably been introduced on the English stage. MALONE.

P. 52, last but one l. The first row of the *pious chanson*] It is *pons chansons* in the first folio edition. The old ballads sung on bridges, and from thence called *Pons chansons*. Hamlet is here repeating ends of old songs. FORD.

It is *pons chansons* in the quarto too. I know not whence the *rubrick* has been brought, yet it has not the appearance of an arbitrary addition. The titles of old ballads were never printed red; but perhaps *rubrick* may stand for *marginal explanation*. JOHNSON.

There are five large volumes of ballads in Mr. Pepys's collection in Magdalen College library, Cambridge, some as ancient as Henry VII's reign, and not one red letter upon any one of the titles.

GRAY.

The words, of the rubrick were first inserted

by Mr. Rowe, in his edition in 1709. The old quartos in 1604, 1605, and 1611, read *pious chanson*, which gives the sense wanted, and I have accordingly inserted it in the text.

The *pious chansons* were a kind of *Christmas carols*, containing some scriptural history thrown into loose rhymes, and sung about the streets by the common people when they went at that season to solicit alms. Hamlet is here repeating some scraps from a song of this kind, and when Polonius enquires what follows them, he refers him to the *first row* (i. e. division) of one of these, to obtain the information he wanted. STEEVENS.

P. 52, last l. — *my abridgement comes.*] He calls the players afterwards, *the brief chronicles of the times*; but I think he now means only *those who will shorten my talk*. JOHNSON.

An *abridgment* is used for a dramatick piece in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Act V. sc. 1:

"Say what *abridgment* have you for this evening?"

but it does not commodiously apply to this passage. STEEVENS.

P. 53, l. 4. — *thy face is valanced*] i. e. fringed with a beard. The valance is the fringes or drapery hanging round the tester of a bed.

MALONE.

The folios read *valiant*, which seems right. The comedian was probably "bearded like the pard." RITSON.

P. 53, l. 5. *Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?*] To *beard*, anciently signified to *set at defiance*. STEEVENS.

P. 53, l. 8. — *by the altitude of a chopine.*] A *chioppine* is a high shoe, or rather, a clog, worn by the Italians. STEEVENS.

O HAMLET,

Credities, 1611, p. 2

and gives the following:
 here is one thing used of
 some others dwelling in
 subject to the signiory of Ve
 served (I thinke) among
 istendome: which is so
 at no woman whatsoever
 her house or abroad, a
 d covered with leather o
 with white, some redde
 ed a chapiney, which the
 s. Many of them are c
 also of them I have see
 ely a thing (in my opinio
 lish custom is not cleane
 d out of the cite. There
 neys of a great height
 which maketh many of it
 short, seeme much tall
 we have in England.

rved among them, that by
 woman is, by so much il
 ys. All their gentlewom
 es and widowes that are o
 and supported eyther by m
 walke abroad, to the end
 y are borne up most con
 , otherwise they might

D.
 l. 10. — *be not crack'd*
 That is, crack'd too much
 so a young player who a

JOHNSON.
 l. 11. 12. *We'll e'er*
 s, *fly at any thing w*

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of falconry was much cultivated in France. *well that ends well*, Shakspeare has introduced an *astringer* or falconer at the French Mr. Tollet, who has mentioned the same instance, likewise adds that it is said in *Sir s Browne's Tracts*, p. 116, that "the seem to have been the first and noblest ers in the western part of Europe;" and, the *French King* sent over his falconers to that sport to King James the First." See *on's Court of King James*. STEEVENS.

53, l. 19. — 'twas *caviare to the general*:] Fletcher in his *Russe Commonwealth*, 1591, says in Russia they have divers kinds of fish y good and delicate: as the Bellouga & Belina of four or five elnes long, the Ositina & geon, but not to thick nor long. These four l of fish breed in the Wolgha and are caught great plenty, and served thence into the whole lme for a good food. Of the roes of these four ds they make very great store of Icary or *Cary*." See also Mr. Ritson's *Remarks*, &c. on Shakspeare, (edit. 1778,) p. 199. REED.

Ben Jonson has ridiculed the introduction of these reign delicacies in his *Cynthia's Revels*: "He oth learn to eat Anchovies, Macaroni, Bovoli, agioli, and *Caviare*," &c. STEEVENS.

Florio in his *Italian Dictionary*, 1598, defines; *Caviaro*, "a kinde of salt meat, used in Italie, like black sope; it is made of the roes of fishes."

Lord Clarendon uses *the general* for *the people*, in the same manner as it is used here. Book V. p. 530 MALONE.

P. 53, l. 20. 21. — others, whose judgements,

in such matters, cried in the top of mine
whose judgement I had the highest opinio

WAR

I think it means only that *were high*
mine. JOHNSON.

Whose judgement, in such matters, was
higher vogue than mine. HEATH.

Perhaps it means only — whose judger
more clamorously delivered than mine.
say of a bawling actor, that he speaks *on*
of his voice. STEEVENS.

To *over-top* is a hunting term applied
when he gives more tongue than the re
cry. To this, I believe, Hamlet refers.
afterwards mentions a *CRY of players.*

P. 53, l. 22. 23. — set down with
modesty as cunning.] Modesty for simp

WA

P. 53, l. 26. — that might *indite* the
affection.] *Indite, for convict.* WARBU

i. e. convict the author of being a fantas
affected writer. Maria calls Malvolio an *af*
ass, i. e. an *affected ass*; and in *Love's*
Lost, Nathaniel tells the Pedant, that hi
have been witty, without affection." S

P. 53, l. 27. — but call'd it, an *honest*
od. Hamlet is telling how much his ju
differed from that of others. *One said, to*
no sall-ts in the lines, &c. but call
honest method. The author probably g
But I called it an honest method, &c.

Honest, for chaste. WARBURTON.

P 54, first l. & fol. *The rugged Pyrr*
M. Malone once observed to me, that N
supposed the speech uttered by the Pla
Hamlet, to have been taken from an

man, entitled "*Dido Queen of Carthage*." I had not then the means of justifying or confuting his remark, the piece alluded to having escaped the hands of the most liberal and industrious collectors of such curiosities. Since, however, I have met with this performance, and am therefore at liberty to pronounce that it did not furnish our author with more than a general hint for his description of the death of Priam, &c.; unless with reference to

"—— the whiff and *wind* of his fell sword

"The unnerved father falls,——"

we read, ver.

"And with the *wind* thereof the King fell
down;"

And can make out a resemblance between

"So as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;"

and ver.

"So leaning on his sword, he stood stone
still."

Many of the subsequent lines are surely more ridiculous in themselves, than even Shakspeare's happiest vein of burlesque or parody could have made them. STEEVENS.

P. 54. l. 6. 7. — *head to foot*

Now is he total gules;] *Gules* is a term in the barbarous jargon peculiar to heraldry, and signifies *red*. STEEVENS.

P. 54, l. 7. — *trick'd*] i. e. smeared, painted. An heraldick term. MALONE.

P. 54, l. 34. — *a painted tyrant,*] Shakspeare was probably here thinking of the tremendous personages often represented in old tapestry, whose uplifted swords stick in the air, and do nothing.
MALONE

P. 55, l. 22. He's for a *jig*, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps:] A *jig*, in our poet's time, signified a ludicrous metrical composition, as well as a dance. Here it is used in the former sense.

MALONE.

P. 55, l. 26. — the *mobled* Queen —] *Mobled* or *mabled* signifies *veiled*. So. Sandys speaking of the Turkish women, says, *their heads and faces are mabled in fine linen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes*. Travels.

WARBURTON.

Mobled signifies *huddled, grossly covered*.

JOHNSON.

I meet with this word in Shirley's *Gentleman of Venice*:

The moon does *mobble* up herself." FARMER.

Mobled, is, I believe, no more than a depravation of *muffled*. It is thus corrupted in *Ogilby's Fables*, Secoud Part:

"*Mobbled* nine days in my considering cap,

"Before my eyes beheld the blessed day."

In the West this word is still used in the same sense; and that is the meaning of *mobble* in Dr. Farmer's quotation. HOLT WHITE.

The *inabled* Queen (or *mobled* Queen, as it is spelt in the quarto,) means, the Queen attired in a large, coarse, and careless head-dress. A few lines lower we are told she had "a *clout* upon that head, where late the diadem stood."

To *mab*, (which in the North is pronounced *mob* and hence the spelling of the old copy in the present instance,) says Ray in his Dict. of North Country words, is "to dress carelessly. *Mabs* are *slatterns*."

The ordinary morning head-dress of ladies continued to be distinguished by the name of a *mat*

to almost the end of the reign of George the Second. The folio reads—the *inobled* Queen.

MALONE.

In the counties of Essex and Middlesex, this morning cap has always been called—a *mob*, and not a *mab*. My spelling of the word therefore agrees with its most familiar pronunciation.

STEEVENS.

P. 55, l. 31. With *bisson* rheum,] *Bisson* or *beesen*, i. e. blind. A word still in use in some parts of the North of England. STEEVENS.

P. 56, l. 11. *Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,*] Drayton in the 13th Song of his *Polyolbion* gives this epithet to dew: "Exhaling the *milch* dew," &c. STEEVENS.

P. 57, l. 13. & fol. — *that this player here, &c.*] It should seem from the complicated nature of such parts as Hamlet, Lear, &c. that the time of Shakspeare had produced some excellent performers. He would scarce have taken the pains to form characters which he had no prospect of seeing represented with force and propriety on the stage.

His plays indeed, by their own power, must have given a different turn to acting, and almost new created the performers of his age. Mysteries, Moralities, and Enterludes, afforded no materials for art to work on, no discriminations of character, or varieties of appropriated language. From tragedies like *Combysses*, *Tamburlaine*, and *Jeronymo*, nature was wholly banished; and the comedies of *Gammer Gurton*, *Common Condyctions*, and *The Old Wives Tale*, might have had justice done to them by the lowest order of human beings.

*Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius
altæ*

was wanting, when the dramas of Shakspeare made their first appearance; and to these we were certainly indebted for the excellence of actors who could never have improved so long as their sensibilities were unawakened, their memories burthened only by pedantick or puritanaical declamation, and their manners vulgarized by pleasantries of low origin. STEEVENS.

P. 57, l. 16. 17. — *That, from her working
all his visage wann's*

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect
The folio — *warm'd*. This might do, did not the old quarto lead us to a more exact and pertinent reading, which is — *visage wan'd*; i. e. turned pale or *wan*. For so the visage appears when the mind is thus affectioned, and not *warm'd* or flushed.

WARBURTON

Wan'd (*wann'd* it should have been spelt) the reading of the quarto, which Dr. Warburton I think rightly, restored. The folio reads *warm* for which Mr. Steevens contends in the following note:

"The working of the soul, and the effort shed tears, will give a colour to the actor's face instead of taking it away. The visage is always *warm'd* and flushed by any unusual exertion in passionate speech; but no performer was ever found, I believe, whose feelings were of such exquisite sensibility as to produce paleness in a situation in which the drama could place him. But if players were indeed possessed of that power, there is no such circumstance in the speech uttered before Hamlet, as could introduce *wanness* for which Dr. Warburton contends."

Whether an actor can produce paleness, I think, unnecessary to enquire. That Shakspeare

thought he could, and considered the *speech* in question as likely to produce *wanness*, is proved decisively by the words which he has put into the mouth of Polonius in this scene; which add such support to the original reading, that I have without hesitation restored it. Immediately after the Player has finished his speech, Polonius exclaims,

“Look, whether he has not *turn’d his colour*, and has *tears in his eyes*.” Here we find the effort to shed tears, *taking away*, not *giving* a colour. MALONE.

The word *aspect* (as Dr. Farmer very properly observes) was in Shakspeare’s time accented on the second syllable. The folio exhibits the passage as I have printed it. STEEVENS.

P. 57, l. 21. *What’s Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,*] It is plain Shakspeare alludes to a story told of Alexander the cruel tyrant of Pherae in Thessaly, who seeing a famous tragedian act in the *Troades* of Euripides, was so sensibly touched that he left the theatre before the play was ended; being ashamed, as he owned, that he who never pitied those he murdered, should weep at the sufferings of *Hecuba* and *Andromache*. See Plutarch in the *Life of Pelopidas*. UPTON.

Shakspeare, it is highly probable, had read the *Life of Pelopidas*, but I see no ground for supposing there is here an allusion to it. Hamlet is not ashamed of being seen to weep at a theatrical exhibition, but mortified that a player, in a dream of passion, should appear more agitated by *fictitious sorrow*, than the Prince was by a real calamity. MALONE.

S TO HAMLET,

the motive and the cue for passion,] The hint, the

reason.

is theatrical, and occurs at least a our author's plays. STEEVENS.

— the general ear —] The ear d. So before, — *Caviare to the ge-* to the multitude. JOHNSON.

11. *John-a-dreams,*] i.e. of dreams, *John the dreamer;* a nick-name, for any ignorant silly fellow. Thus

formerly thrown at during the season was called *Jack-a-lent*, and the iguis *Jack-a-lanthorn*. *John-a-droynes* how- ot a corruption of this nick-name, seems een some well known character, as I have more than one allusion to him. STEEVENS.

, 1. 31. — *unpregnant of my cause,*] Un- nt, for *having no due sense of.* WARBURTON.

er, not quickened with a new desire o- ance; not teeming with revenge. JOHNSON.

57, 1. 34. A dam'nd defeat was made at, for destruction. WARBURTON.

rather, disposition. JOHNSON. the word *defeat*, (which certainly means uction in the present instance) is very li usly used by the old writers. Shakspear *thello* employs it yet more quaintly. — "D y favour with an usurped beard." STEEVE

P. 58, 1. 10. — — kindless —] Unnatur

58, 1. 18. — About my brains!]

your work. Brain, go about the present business. JOHNSON.

This expression (which seems a parody on the naval one, — *about ship!*) occurs in the Second Part of the *Iron Age*, by Heywood, 1632.

"My brain about again! for thou hast found

"New projects now to work on."

About, my brain! therefore, (as Mr. M. Mason observes) appears to signify, "be my thoughts shifted into a contrary direction." STEEVENS.

P. 58, l. 20-23. *That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,*

Have by the very cunning of the scene

Been struck so to the soul, that presently

They have proclaim'd their malefactions.]

A number of these stories are collected together by Thomas Heywood, in his *Actor's Vindication*.

STEEVENS.

P. 58, l. 28. — *tent him* —] Search his wounds.

JOHNSON.

P. 58, l. 28. — *if he do blench,*] If he shrink, or start. STEEVENS.

P. 58, last but one l. — I'll have grounds

More relative than this:] Relative, for convictive. WARBURTON.

Convictive is only the consequential sense. *Relative* is nearly related, closely connected.

JOHNSON.

P. 59, l. 18. 19. *Niggard of question; but, of our demands,*

Most free in his reply.] This is given as the description of the conversation of a man whom the speaker found not forward to be sounded; and who kept aloof when they would bring him to a confession: but such a description can

never pass but at cross-purposes. Shakspeare certainly wrote it just the other way :

Most free of question; but, of our demands,

Niggard in his reply.

That this is the true reading, we need but turn back to the preceding scene, for Hamlet's conduct—to be satisfied. WARBURTON.

Warburton forgets that by *question*, Shakspeare does not usually mean *interrogatory*, but *discourse*; yet in which ever sense the word is taken, this account given by Rosencrantz agrees but ill with the scene between him and Hamlet as actually represented. M. MASON.

Slow to begin conversation, but free enough in his answers to our demands. Guildenstern has just said that Hamlet kept aloof when they wished to bring him to confess the cause of his distraction: Rosencrantz therefore here must mean that *up to that point*, till they touch'd on that he was free enough in his answers. MALONE.

P. 59, l. 22. 25. — — that certain players

We o'er-raught on the way:] *Over-raught* is *over-reached*, that is, *over-took*. JOHNSON.

P. 60, l. 6. 7. *That he, as 'twere by accident, may here*

Affront Ophelia:] *To affront*, is only to *meet directly*. JOHNSON.

P. 60, l. 28. *'Tis too much prov'd.*] It is found by too frequent experience. JOHNSON.

P. 60, l. 34. *Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,*] That is *compared with* the thing that helps it. JOHNSON

P. 61, l. 4. and fol. Ham. To be, or not to be. &c. Of this celebrated soliloquy, which bursting from a man distracted with contrariety of desires,

verwhelmed with the magnitude of his own purposes, is connected rather in the speaker's mind, than on his tongue, I shall endeavour to discover the train, and to shew how one sentiment produces another.

Hamlet, knowing himself injured in the most enormous and atrocious degree, and seeing no means of redress, but such as must expose him to the extremity of hazard, meditates on his situation in this manner: *Before I can form any rational scheme of action under this pressure of distress, it is necessary to decide, whether, after our present state, we are to be, or not to be. That is the question, which, as it shall be answered, will determine, whether 'tis nobler, and more suitable to the dignity of reason, to suffer the outrages of fortune patiently, or to take arms against them, and by opposing end them, though perhaps with the loss of life. If to die, were to sleep, no more, and by a sleep to end the miseries of our nature, such a sleep were devoutly to be wished; but if to sleep in death, be to dream, to retain our powers of sensibility, we must pause to consider, in that sleep of death what dreams may come. This consideration makes calamity so long endured; for who would bear the vexations of life; which might be ended by a bare bodkin, but that he is afraid of something in unknown futurity? This fear it is that gives efficacy to conscience, which, by turning the mind upon this regard, chills the ardour of resolution, checks the vigour of enterprise and makes the current of desire stagnate in inactivity.*

We may suppose that he would have applied these general observations to his own case; but that he discovered Ophelia. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson's explication of the first five lines of this passage is surely wrong. Hamlet is not deliberating whether after our present state we are to exist or not, but whether he should continue to live, or put an end to his life: as is pointed out by the second and the three following lines, which are manifestly a paraphrase on the first; "whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer, &c. or to take arms." The question concerning our existence in a future state is not considered till the tenth line:—"To sleep! perchance, to *dream*;" &c. The train of Hamlet's reasoning from the middle of the fifth line. "If to die, were to sleep," &c. Dr. Johnson has marked out with his usual accuracy.

MALONE.

P. 61, l. 6. *The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune*;] "Hominibus nos ut esse meminerimus, eâ lege uatos, ut omnibus telis fortunæ proposita sit vita nostra." Cic. Epist. Fam. v. 16. STEVENS.

P. 61, l. 7. — *to take arms against a sea of troubles*,] *A sea of troubles* among the Greeks grew into a proverbial usage; κακῶν θάλασσα, κακῶν τρικυμία. So that the expression figuratively means, the troubles of human life, which flow in upon us, and encompass us round, like a sea. THEOBALD.

Mr. Pope proposes *siege*. I know not why there should be so much solicitude about this metaphor. Shakspeare breaks his metaphors often, and in this desultory speech there was less need of preserving them. JOHNSON.

One cannot but wonder that the smallest doubt should be entertained concerning an expression which is so much in Shakspeare's manner; yet, to preserve the integrity of the metaphor, Dr. Warbur-

ton reads *assail* of troubles. In the *Prometheus Vinc-tus* of Aeschylus a similar imagery is found:

Δυσχειμερον γε πελαγος ατηρης δυης.

"The stormy sea of dire calamity."

and in the same play, as an anonymous writer has observed, (*Gent. Magazine*, Aug. 1772,) we have a metaphor no less harsh than that of the text:

Θολεροι δε λογοι παιουσ' εικη

Στυγνης προς κυμασιν ατης.

"My plaintive words in vain confusedly beat

"Against the waves of hateful misery."

Shakspeare might have found the very phrase that he has employed, in *The Tragedy of Queen Cordila*, MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES, 1575, which undoubtedly he read:

"For lacke of frendes to tell my seas of gilt-lesse smart." MALONE.

Menander uses this very expression. *Fragm.* p. 22. Amstel. 12mo. 1719:

Εις πελαγος αυτον εμβαλεις γαρ πραγμα-των.

"In *mare molestiarum* te conjicies."

HOLT WHITE.

P. 61, l. 8. — *To die, — to sleep,*] This passage is ridiculed in *The Scornful Lady* of Beaumont and Fletcher, as follow:

"—— he deceas'd, that is, asleep, for so the word is taken. *To sleep. to die; to die, to sleep;* a very figure, sir." &c. &c. STEEVENS.

P. 61, l. 15. — *coil,*] i. e. turmoil, bustle.

WARBURTON.

P. 61, l. 16. — *There's the respect,*] i. e. the consideration MALONE.

P. 61, l. 18 et fol. *For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,*

The oppressor's wrong, &c.] The evils here complained of are not the product of time or duration simply, but of a corrupted age or manners. We may be sure, then, that Shakspeare wrote:

— *the whips and scorns* of th' time.
and the description of the evils of a corrupt age, which follows, confirms this emendation.

WARBURTON.

It may be remarked, that Hamlet, in his enumeration of miseries, forgets, whether properly or not, that he is a Prince, and mentions many evils to which inferior stations only are exposed.

JOHNSON.

I think we might venture to read — *the whips and scorns o'the times*, i. e. of times satirical as the age of Shakspeare, which probably furnished him with the idea.

In the reigns of Elizabeth and James (particularly in the former) there was more illiberal private abuse and peevish satire published, than in any others I ever knew of, except the present one. I have many of these publications, which were almost all pointed at individuals.

Whips and scorns are surely as inseparable companions, as public punishment and infamy.

Quips, the word which Dr Johnson would introduce, is derived, by all etymologists, from *whips*.

Hamlet is introduced as reasoning on a question of general concernment. He therefore takes in all such evils as could befall mankind in general, without considering himself at present as a Prince, or wishing to avail himself of the few exemptions which high place might once have claimed.

In part of King James 1st Entertainment pass

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ing to his Coronation, by Ben Jonson and Decker, is the following line, and note on that line:

“And first account of years, of months,
OF TIME.”

“By time we understand the present.” This explanation affords the sense for which I have contended, and without change. STEEVENS.

P. 61, l. 23. 24. When he himself might his quietus make

With a bare bodkin?] The first expression probably alluded to the writ of discharge which was formerly granted to those barons and knights who personally attended the King on any foreign expedition. This discharge was called a *quietus*. It is at this time the term for the acquittance which every sheriff receives on settling his accounts at the exchequer.

A *bodkin* was the ancient term for a *small dagger*. STEEVENS.

By a *bare bodkin*, does not perhaps mean, “by so little an instrument as a dagger,” but “by an unsheathed dagger.”

In the account which Mr. Steevens has given of the original meaning of the term *quietus*, after the words, ‘who personally attended the King on any foreign expedition,’ should have been added. — *and were therefore exempted from the claims of scutage, or a tax on every knight’s fee.* MALONE.

P. 61, l. 25. To grunt and sweat] Thus the old copies. It is undoubtedly the true reading, but can scarcely be borne by modern ears.

JOHNSON.

I apprehend that it is the duty of an editor to exhibit what his author wrote, and not to substitute what may appear to the present age prefer-

able: and Dr. Johnson was of the same opinion. See his note on the word *hugger-mugger*, Act. IV. sc. v. I have therefore, though with some reluctance, adhered to the old copies, however unpleasing this word may be to the ear. On the stage, without doubt, an actor is at liberty to substitute a less offensive word. To the ears of our successors it probably conveyed no unpleasing sound; for we find it used by Chaucer and others:

"But never *gront* he at no stroke but on,
"Or elles at two, but if his storie lie."

The Monkes Tale, v. 14027, Tyrwhitt's
edit. MALONE.

P. 61, l. 27. 28. *The undiscover'd country,
from whose bourn*

No traveller returns, — puzzles the will;

This has been cavilled at by Lord Orrery and others, but without reason. The idea of a *traveller* in Shakspeare's time, was of a person who gave an account of his adventures. Every voyage was a *Discovery*. John Taylor has "*A Discovery*, by sea from London to Salisbury."

FAXMER.

This passage has been objected to by others on a ground which, at the first view of it, seems more plausible. Hamlet himself, it is objected, has had ocular demonstration that travellers do sometimes return from this strange country.

I formerly thought this an inconsistency. But this objection also is founded on a mistake. Our poet without doubt in the passage before us intended to say, that from the *unknown* regions of the dead no traveller returns, with all his *corporal powers*; such as he who goes on a voyage of *discovery* brings back, when he returns to the port from which he sailed. The traveller whom

Hamlet had seen, though he appeared in the same habit which he had worn in his life time, was nothing but a shadow; "invulnerable as the air," and consequently *incorporeal*.

If, says the objector, the traveller has once reached this coast, it is not an undiscovered country. But by *undiscovered*, Shakspeare, meant not undiscovered by departed spirits, but, undiscovered or unknown to "such fellows as us, who crawl beneath earth and heaven;" *superis incognita tellus*. In this sense every country, of which the traveller does not return *alive* to give an account, may be said to be *undiscovered*. The ghost has given us no account of the region from whence he came, being, as he has himself informed us, "forbid to tell the secrets of his prison-house."

MALONE.

Perhaps this is another instance of Shakspeare's acquaintance with his Bible: "Afore I goe thither, from *whence I shall not turne againe*, even to the lande of darknesse and shadowe of death; yea into that darke cloudie lande and dead ye shadowe whereas is no order, but terrible feare as in the darknesse." *Job*, ch. x.

"The way that I must goe is at hande, but *whence I shall not turne againe*." *Ibid*. ch. 16.

I quote Cranmer's Bible. DOUCE.

P. 61, last but one l. And enterprizes of great *pitch*] Thus the folio.

The quartos read, of great *pitch*. STEEVENS.

Pitch seems to be the better reading. The allusion is to the *pitching* or throwing *the bar*; — a manly exercise, usual in country villages. RITSON.

P. 62, l. 2. 3. — *Nymph, in thy orisons*

Be all my sins remember'd.] This is a touch of nature. Hamlet, at the sight of

Ophelia does not immediately recollect, that he is to personate madness, but makes her an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts. JOHNSON.

P. 62, l. 23. 24. *That if you be honest, and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.*] This is the reading of all the modern editions, and is copied from the quarto. The folio reads, — *your honesty* should admit no discourse to your beauty. The true reading seems to be this, — *If you be honest and fair, you should admit your honesty to no discourse with your beauty.* This is the sense evidently required by the process of the conversation. JOHNSON.

The reply of Ophelia proves beyond doubt, that this reading is wrong.

The reading of the folio appears to be the right one, and requires no amendment. — “Your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty,” means, — “Your honesty should not admit your beauty to any discourse with her;” which is the very sense that Johnson contends for, and expressed with sufficient clearness. M. MASON.

P. 62, l. 29. 30. — *that the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness:*] The modern editors read — *its* likeness; but the text is right. Shakspeare and his contemporaries frequently use the personal for the neutral pronoun.

MALONE.

P. 63, l. 6. — *with more offences at my beck*] — That is, *always ready to come about me.*

STEEVENS.

P. 63, l. 7. — *than I have thoughts to put them in,*] To put a thing into thought, is to *think on it.* JOHNSON.

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P. 63, l. 25. *I have heard of your paintings too, &c.*] This is according to the quarto; the folio, for *painting*, has *prattlings*, and for *face* has *pace*, which agrees with what follows, *you jig, you amble*. Probably the author wrote both. I think the common reading best. JOHNSON.

I would continue to read, *paintings*, because these destructive aids of beauty seem, in the time of Shakspeare, to have been general objects of satire. STEEVENS.

P. 63, l. 26. 27. *God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another:*] In *Guzman de Alfarache*, 1623, p. 13, we have an invective against painting in which is a similar passage: "O filthinesse, above all filthinesse! O affront, above all other affronts! *that God having given thee one face, thou shouldst abuse his image and make thyselfe another.*" REED.

P. 63, l. 29. — *and make your wantonness your ignorance:*] You mistake by wanton affectation, and pretend to mistake by ignorance.

JOHNSON.

P. 63, l. 31. 32. — *those that are married already, all but one, shall live;*] By the one who shall not live, he means his step-father.

MALONE.

P. 64, l. 1. 2. *The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword:*] The poet certainly meant to have placed his words thus:

*The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye,
tongue, sword;*

otherwise the excellence of tongue is appropriated to the soldier, and the scholar wears the sword.

WATKINS.

This regulation is needless. So, in *Tarquin and Lucrece*:

"Princes are the *glass*, the *school*, the *book*,

"Where subjects eyes do *learn*, do *read*,
do *look*."

And in *Quintilian*: "*Multum agit ætus, ætas, conditio; ut in faeminis, senibus, pupillis, liberis, parentes, conjuges, alligantibus.*"

FARMER.

P. 64, l. 4. *The glass of fashion,*] "*Speculum consuetudinis.*" Cicero. STEEVENS.

P. 64, l. 4. — *the mould of form,*] The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves.

JOHNSON.

P. 64, l. 9. *Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;*] Thus

the folio. The quarto — *out of time.* STEEVENS.

These two words in the hand-writings of Shakespeare's age are almost indistinguishable, and hence are frequently confounded in the old copies.

MALONE.

P. 64, l. 11. *Blasted with ecstasy:*] The word *ecstasy* was anciently used to signify some degree of alienation of mind.

So, Gawin Douglas, translating — *stetit acrifixa dolore*:

"In *ecstasy* she stood, and mad almost."

STEEVENS.

P. 64, l. 19. — *the disclose,*] This was the technical term. MALONE.

P. 64, l. 2. — *let her be round with him;*] To *be round* with a person, is to reprimand him with freedom. So, in *A Mad World, my Masters*, by Middleton, 1608: "She's round with her faith."

MALONE.

P. 65, l. 22. — *a robustious perriwig-pated fellow*] This is a ridicule on the quantity of false hair worn in Shakspeare's time, for wigs were not in common use till the reign of Charles II. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Julia says — "I'll get me such a colour'd perriwig."

Players, however, seem to have worn them most generally. So, in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609: "—— as none wear hoods but monks and ladies; and feathers but fore-horses, &c; — none perriwigs but players and pictures.

STEEVENS.

P. 65, l. 23. 24. to split the ears of the *groundlings*.] The meaner people then seem to have sat below, as they now sit in the upper gallery, who, not well understanding poetical language, were sometimes gratified by a mimical and mute representation of the drama, previous to the dialogue.

JOHNSON.

Before each act of the tragedy of *Jocasta*, translated from Euripides, by Geo. Gascoigne and Fra. Kinwelmersh, the order of these dumb shows is very minutely described. This play was presented at Gray's Inn by them in 1566. The mute exhibitions included in it are chiefly emblematical, nor do they display a picture of one single scene which is afterwards performed on the stage. In some other pieces I have observed, that they serve to introduce such circumstances as the limits of a play would not admit to be represented.

In short, dumb shows sometimes supplied deficiencies, and, at others, filled up the space of time which was necessary to pass while business was supposed to be transacted in foreign parts. With this method of preserving one of the unities, our ancestors appear to have been satisfied.

Ben Jonson mentions the *groundlings* with equal contempt. "The understanding gentlemen of the ground here."

In our early play-houses the pit had neither floor nor benches. Hence the term of *groundlings* for those who frequented it.

The *groundling*, in its primitive signification, means a fish which always keeps at the bottom of the water. STEEVENS.

P. 65, l. 24-26. — who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise.] i. e. have a capacity for nothing but dumb shows; understanding nothing else. So, in Heywood's *History of Women*, 1624: "I have therein imitated our *historical* and comical poets, that write to the stage; who, lest the auditory should be dulled with serious discourses, in every act present some zany, with his mimick gesture, to breed in the less capable mirth and laughter. MALONE.

I believe the meaning is, *shows, without words to explain them.* JOHNSON.

Rather, I believe shows which are too confusedly conducted to explain themselves.

I meet with one of these in Heywood's play of *The Four Prentices of London*, 1615, where the *Presenter* says:

"I must entreat your patience to forbear

"While we do feast your eye and starve your
ear,

"For in *dumb shews*, which, were they
writ at large,

"Would ask a long and tedious circum-
stance,

"Their infant fortunes I will soon ex-
press." &c.

Then follow the *dumb shows*, which well deserve the character Hamlet has already given of this species of entertainment, as may be seen from the following passage: "Enter Tancred, with Bella Franca richly attired, she *somewhat affecting him*, though she makes *no show of it*." Surely this may be called an *inexplicable dumb show*.

STEEVENS.

P. 65, l. 27. *Termagant* (says Dr. Percy) is the name given in the old romances to the god of the *Sarazens*; in which he is constantly linked with *Mahound*, or *Mohammed*. Thus in the legend of *Syr Guy*, the Soudan swears;

"So helpe me *Mahowne* of might,

"And *Termagaunt* my God so bright,"

Termagant is also mentioned by Spencer in his *Faery Queen*, and by Chaucer in *The Tale of Sir Topas*; and by Beaumont and Fletcher in *King or no King*, as follows: "This would make a saint swear like a soldier, and a soldier like *Termagant*." STEEVENS.

P. 65, l. 27. — *it out-herods Herod*:] The character of *Herod* in the ancient mysteries, was always a violent one.

Chaucer, describing a parish clerk, in his *Mil-ler's Tale*, says:

"He playeth *Herodes* on a skaffold high."

The parish clerks and other subordinate ecclesiastics appear to have been our first actors, and to have represented their characters on distinct pulpits for *scaffolds*. Thus, in one of the stage-directions to the 27th pageant in the Coventry collection already mentioned: "What tyme that processyon is entered into y^e place, and the Herowdys taken his *scheff-falde*, and Annas and Cayphas their *scheffaldys*," &c. STEEVENS.

P. 66, l. 5-5. — *to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure.*] The *age* of the *time* can hardly pass. May we not read, the *face* and *body*, or did the author write, the *page*? The *page* suits well with *form* and *pressure*, but ill with *body*. JOHNSON.

To exhibit the *form* and *pressure* of the *age* of the *time*, is, to represent the manners of the time suitable to the period that is treated of, according as it may be ancient, or modern. STEVENS.

I can neither think this passage right as it stands, or approve of either of the amendments suggested by Johnson. — There is one more simple than either, that will remove every difficulty. Instead of *the very age and body of the time*, (from which it is hard to extract any meaning,) I read — “*every age and body of the time*,” and then the sense will be this — “Show virtue her own likeness, and every stage of life, every profession or body of men, its form and resemblance.” By *every age*, is meant the *different stages of life*; — by *every body*, the *various fraternities, sorts, and ranks of mankind*. M. MASON.

Perhaps Shakspeare did not mean to connect these words. It is the end of playing, says Hamlet, to shew the age in which we live, and the body of the time, its form and pressure: to delineate exactly the manners of the age, and the particular humour of the day. MALONE.

Pressure. i. e. Resemblance, as in a *print*.

JOHNSON.

P. 66, l. 8. — the *censure* of which one,] The meaning is, “the *censure* of one of which,” and probably that should be the reading also. The

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not reading, though intelligible, is very licentious, especially in prose. M. MALONE.

66, l. 9. — *in your allowance,*] in your apportionment. MALONE.

66, l. 10-16 — *there be players, that I have seen play, — and heard others praise, and that highly, — not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of christians, nor the accent of christian, pagan, nor man, have strutted, and bellow'd, that I have thought of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, &c.*] I would read: "There be players, that I have seen play, heard others praise, and that highly (not to speak profanely) that neither having the accent nor the accent of Christian, Pagan, nor *Mussulman*, have strutted and bellowed, that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made *the men*, and not made them well," &c. FARMER.

There is no doubt that our author wrote, — "that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well," &c. *Them* and *men* are frequently confounded in the old copies. In the present instance the compositor probably omitted the word *men* from the last syllable of *journeymen*. Shakspeare could not mean to assert as a general truth, that nature's journeymen made *men*, i. e. all mankind; for, if that were the case, these strutting players would have stood on a footing with the rest of the species. Naturally, the poet means to say, made all mankind except these strutting players, and they were made by Nature's *journeymen*.

His notion of Nature keeping a shop, and employing journeymen to form mankind, was common in Shakspeare's time. MALONE.

Profanely seems to relate, not to the which he has mentioned, but to the censure he is about to utter. Any gross or indelicate guage was called *profane*. JOHNSON.

P. 66, l. 20. et fol. — *And let those, play your clowns; speak no more than down for them: &c.*] Stowe informs us, (1 edit. 1615), that among the twelve players were sworn the Queen's servants in 1583, two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson, for a delicate refined *extemporall witte*; and R Tarleton, for a wondrous plentiful, pleasant *temporall witt. &c.*"

Again, in *Tarleton's Newes from Purgatorie* — "I absented myself from all plaies, as being that merrye Roscius of plaiers that famous comedies so with his pleasant and *extemporall invention.*"

This cause for complaint, however, against comedians, is still more ancient. STEEVENS.

The clown very often addressed the audience in the middle of the play, and entered into a course of raillery and sarcasm with such of the audience as chose to engage with him. It is to this practice that Shakspeare alludes. See the *Historical Account of our old English Theatres*, II. MALONE.

P. 67, l. 16. *And crook the pregnant knee,*]

Believe the sense of *pregnant* in this place is, *ready, prompt*. JOHNSON.

P. 67, l. 16. — *my dear soul*] Perhaps *dear* soul. JOHNSON.

Dear soul is an expression equivalent to *φίλα γούνατα*, *φιλον ἡτορ*, of Homer.

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P. 67, l. 24. *Whose blood and judgement are
so well co-mingled,]*

According to the doctrine of the four humours, *desire* and *confidence* were seated in the blood, and *judgement* in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character. JOHNSON.

P. 68 l. 5. — *Vulcans smithy.] Stithy is a smith's anvil.* JOHNSON.

P. 68, l. 23. 24. — *these words are not mine.*

Ham. *No, nor mine now]* A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keeps them unspoken. JOHNSON.

P. 68, l. 25. — *you play'd once in the university,]* It should seem from the following passage in Vice Chancellor Hatchet's letters to Lord Burghley on June 21, 1580, that the common players were likewise occasionally admitted to perform there: "Whereas it hath pleased your Honour to recommend my lorde of Oxenford his players, that they might show their quunning in several plays already practised by 'em before the Queen's Majesty" — (denied on account of the pestilence and commencement:) "of late we denied the like to the Right Honourable the Lord of Leicester his servants." FARMER.

The practice of acting Latin plays in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, is very ancient, and continued to near the middle of the last century. They were performed occasionally for the entertainment of Princes and other great personages; and regularly at Christmas, at which time a *Lord of misrule* was appointed at Oxford, to regulate the exhibitions, and a similar officer with the title of *Imperator*, at Cambridge. The most celebrated actors at Cambridge were the students of St. John's and King's colleges: at Ox-

ford, those of Christ-Church. In the hall of that college a Latin comedy called *Marcus Geminus*, and the Latin tragedy of *Progne*, were performed before Queen Elizabeth in the year 1566; and in 1564, the Latin tragedy of *Dido* was played before her Majesty, when she visited the university of Cambridge. The exhibition was in the body or nave of the chapel of King's college, which was lighted by the royal guards, each of whom bore a staff torch in his hand. See Peck's *Desider. Cur.* p. 36, n. x. The actors in this piece were all of that college. The author of the tragedy, who in the Latin account of this royal visit, in the Museum, [MSS. Baker, 7037, p. 203,] is said to have been *Regalis Collegii olim socius*, was, I believe, John Rightwise, who was elected a fellow of King's college, in 1507, and according to Anthony Wood. "made the tragedy of *Dido* out of Virgil, and acted the same with the scholars of his school [St. Paul's, of which he was appointed master in 1522,] before Cardinal Wolsey with great applause." In 1583, the same play was performed at Oxford, in Christ-Church hall, before Albertus de Alasco, a Polish Prince Palatine, as was William Gager's Latin comedy, entitled *Rivales*. On Elizabeth's second visit to Oxford, in 1592, a few years before the writing of the present play, she was entertained on the 24th and 26th of September, with the representation of the last-mentioned play, and another Latin comedy, called *Bellum Grammaticale*. MALONE.

P. 68, l. 50. *I did enact Julius Caesar:] A Latin play on the subject of Caesar's death performed at Christ-Church in Oxford, in 15th and several years before, a Latin play on the subject, written by Jacques Grevin, was ac*

the college of Beauvais, at Paris. I suspect that there was likewise an English play on the story of Caesar before the time of Shakspeare. See *Essay on the Order of Shakspeare's Plays*. MALONE.

P. 68, l. 30. 31. *I was kill'd i' the Capitol;*] This, it is well known, was not the case; for Caesar, we are expressly told by Plutarch, was killed in *Pompey's Portico*. But our poet followed the received opinion, and probably the representation of his own time, in a play on the subject of Caesar's death, previous to that which he wrote. The notion that Julius Caesar was killed in the Capitol is as old as the time of Chaucer.

MALONE.

P. 68, l. 32. *It was a brute part of him,*] Sir John Harrington in his *Metamorphosis of Ajax*, 1596, has the same quibble: "O brave-minded *Brutus*! but this I must truly say, they were two *bruitish* parts both of him and you: one to kill his sons for treason, the other to kill his father in treason." STEEVENS.

P. 68, last l. — they stay upon your *patience*.] May it not be read more intelligibly, — *they stay upon your pleasure*. In *Macbeth* it is:

"Noble Macbeth, we stay upon your *Leisure*."

JOHNSON.

P. 69, l. 6. [*Lying down at OPHELIA's feet.*] To lie at the feet of a mistress during any dramatick representation, seems to have been a common act of gallantry. STEEVENS.

P. 69, l. 10. *I meant country matters?*] Dr. Johnson, from a casual inadvertence, proposed to read—*country manners*. The old reading is certainly right. What Shakspeare meant to allude to,

must be too obvious to every reader, to require any explanation. MALONE.

P. 69, l. 19. — *your only jig-maker.*] There may have been some humour in this passage, the force of which is now diminished :

“ ——— many gentlemen

“ Are not, as in the days of understanding,

“ Now satisfied without a *jig*, which since

“ They cannot, with their honour, call
for after

“ The play, they look to be serv’d up in
the middle.”

Changes, or Love in a Maze, by
Shirley, 1652.

In *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, 1644, one of the players comes to solicit a gentleman to *write a jig* for him. A *jig* was not in Shakspeare’s time only a dance, but a ludicrous dialogue in metre, and of the lowest kind, like Hamlet’s conversation with Ophelia. Many of these jiggs are entered in the books of the Stationers’ Company: — “*Philips his Jigg of the slyppers*, 1595. *Keinpe’s Jigg of the Kitchen-stuff-woman*, 1595.” STEEVENS.

A *jig* was not always in the form of a dialogue. Many historical ballads were formerly called *jigs*.

MALONE.

A *jig*, though it signified a ludicrous dialogue in metre, yet it also was used for a dance. RITSON.

P. 69, l. 24. 25. *Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I’ll have a suit of sables.*] The conceit of these words is not taken. They are an ironical apology for his mother’s cheerful looks: two months was long enough in conscience to make any dead husband forgotten. But the editors in their nonsensical blunder, have made Hamlet say

just the contrary. That the devil and he would both go into mourning; though his mother did not. The true reading is — *Nay, then let the devil wear black, 'fore I'll have a suit of sable.* 'Fore, i. e. before. As much as to say, — Let the devil wear black for me, I'll have none. The Oxford editor despises an emendation so easy, and reads it thus, — *Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of ermine.* And you could expect no less, when such a critick had the dressing of him. But the blunder was a pleasant one. The senseless editors had wrote *sables*, the fur so called, for *sable*, black. And the critick only changed this fur for that; by a like figure, the common people say, — *You rejoice the cockles of my heart, for the muscles of my heart;* an unlucky mistake of one shell-fish for another.

WARBURTON.

I know not why our editors should with such implacable anger persecute their predecessors. *Οἱ νεκροὶ μὴ δύνουσιν*, the dead, it is true, can make no resistance, they may be attacked with great security; but since they can neither feel nor mend, the safety of mauling them seems greater than the pleasure; nor perhaps would it much misbecome us to remember, amidst our triumphs over the *nonsensical* and *senseless*, that we likewise are men; that *debemur morti*, and as Swift observed to Burnet, shall soon be among the dead ourselves.

I cannot find how the common reading is nonsense, nor why Hamlet, when he laid aside his dress of mourning, in a country where it was bitter cold, and the air was nipping and eager, should not have a suit of sables. I suppose it

well enough known, that the fur of *sables* is not black. JOHNSON.

A *suit of sables* was the richest dress that could be worn in Denmark. STEEVENS.

Here again is an equivoque. In *Massinger's Old Law*, we have,

“—— A cunning grief,

“That's only faced with *sables* for a show,

“But gawdy-hearted. FARMER.

Nay then, says Hamlet, if my father be so long dead as you say, let the devil wear black; as for me, so far from wearing a mourning dress, I'll wear the most costly and magnificent suit that can be procured; *a suit trimmed with sables*.

Our poet furnished Hamlet with a suit of *sables* on the present occasion, not as I conceive, because such a dress was suited to “a country where it was bitter cold, and the air was nipping and eager,” (as Dr. Johnson supposed,) nor because “a suit of *sables* was the richest dress that could be worn in *Denmark*,” (as Mr. Steevens had suggested,) of which probably he had no knowledge, but because a suit trimmed with *sables* was in Shakspeare's time the richest dress worn by men in *England*. We have had again and again occasion to observe, that, wherever his scene might happen to be, the customs of his own country were still in his thoughts.

By the statute of apparel, 24 Henry VIII, c. 13, (article *furres*,) it is ordained, that none under the degree of an *earl* may use *sables*.

Bishop says in his *Blossoms*, 1577, speaking of the extravagance of those times, that a thousand *ducates* were sometimes given for “a face of *sables*.”

: That a *suit of sables* was the magnificent dress of our author's time, appears from a passage in Ben Jonson's *Discoveries*: "Would you not laugh to meet a *great counsellor of state*, in a flat cap, with his trunk-hose, and a hobby-horse cloak, and yond haberdasher in a velvet gown trimm'd with *sables*?"

Florio in his Italian Dictionary, 1598, thus explains *zibilini*: "The *rich furre* called *sables*." — *Sables* is the skin of the sable Martin.

MALONE.

P. 69, l. 28. 29. — *he must build churches then*:] Such benefactors to society were sure to be recorded by means of the feast-day on which the patron saints and founders of churches were commemorated in every parish. This custom having been long disused, the names of the builders of sacred edifices are no longer known to the vulgar, and are preserved only in antiquarian memoirs. STEEVENS.

P. 69, l. 30. — *the hobby-horse*;] Amongst the country May-games there was an hobby-horse, which, when the puritannical humour of those times opposed and discredited these games, was brought by the poets and ballad-makers as an instance of the ridiculous zeal of the sectaries: from these ballads Hamlet quotes a line or two.

WARBURTON.

P. 69, l. 31. *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse it forgot*.] In *Love's Labour's Lost*, this line is also introduced. In a small black letter book, entitled, *Plays Confuted*, by Stephen Gosson, I find the *hobby-horse* enumerated in the list of dances. STEEVENS.

P. 70, l. 16. — *this is mitching mallecho*: it means mischief.] *To mitch* signified, originally,

to keep hid and out of sight; and, as such men generally did it for the purposes of *lying in wait*, it then signified to rob. And in this sense Shakespeare uses the noun, a *micher*, when speaking of Prince Henry amongst a gang of robbers. *Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher? Shall the son of England prove a thief?* And in this sense it is used by Chaucer, in his translation of *Le Roman de la Rose*, where he turns the word *lierre*, (which is *larron*, *voleur*,) by *micher*.

WARBURTON.

The word *miching* is daily used in the West of England for *playing truant*, or sculking about in private for some sinister purpose; and *malicho*, inaccurately written for *malheco*, signifies *mischievous*; so that *miching malicho* is *mischievous on the watch for opportunity*. When Ophelia asks Hamlet—"What means this?" she applies to him for an explanation of what she had not seen in the show; and not, as Dr. Warburton would have it, the purpose for which the show was contrived. Besides, *malhechor* no more signifies a *poisoner*, than a perpetrator of any other crime. HENLEY.

A secret and wicked contrivance; a concealed wickedness. To *mich* is a provincial word; and was probably once general, signifying to lie hid, or play the truant. In Norfolk *michers* signify *pilferers*. The signification of *miching* in the present passage may be ascertained by a passage in Decker's *Wonderful Years*, 4to. 1603: "Those that could shift for a time,—went most bitterly *miching* and muffled, up and downe, with rue and wormwood stuf into their eare and noowils."

MALTON.

P. 70, l. 25. Be not you ashamed to show

he conversation of Hamlet with Ophelia, which cannot fail to disgust every modern reader, is probably such as was peculiar to the young and fashionable of the age of Shakspeare, which was; no means, an age of delicacy. The poet is, however, blameable; for extravagance of thought, or indecency of expression, is the characteristic of madness, at least of such madness as should be presented on the scene. STEEVENS.

P. 71, l. 2. *Phoebus' cart*] A chariot was anciently so called. STEEVENS.

P. 71, l. 5. — with borrow'd *sheen*,] Splendor, lustre. JOHNSON.

P. 71, l. 25. *My operant powers*] *Operant* active. Shakspeare gives it in *Timon of Athens* an epithet to *poison*. STEEVENS.

P. 71, l. 34. *The instances*,] *The motives*. JOHNSON.

P. 72, l. 11. *To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:*] The performance of a resolution, in which only the solver is interested, is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at pleasure.

JOHNSON.

P. 72, l. 14. 15. *The violence of either grief or joy*

Their own enactures with themselves destroy:] What grief or joy enact or determine in their violence, is revoked in their abatement. *Enactures* is the word in the quarto; all the modern editions have *enactors*.

JOHNSON.

P. 73, l. 5. *An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!*] May my sole liberty and enjoyment be to live on here.

mit's fare in a prison. *Anchor* is for *anchoret*.
JOHNSON.

This abbreviation of the word *anchoret* is very ancient. STEEVENS.

P. 73, l. 30. — *his wife, Baptista:*] *Baptista* is, I think, in Italian, the name always of a man.
JOHNSON.

I believe *Battista* is never used singly by the Italians, being uniformly compounded with *Giam* (for *Giovanni*), and meaning, of course, *John the Baptist*. Nothing more was therefore necessary to detect the forgery of Shebbeare's *Letters on the English Nation*, than his ascribing them to *Battista Angeloni*. RITSON.

P. 73, l. 33. *Let the gall'd jade wince,*] This is a proverbial saying. STEEVENS.

P. 73, last l. This is one Lucianus, *nephew to the King.*] i. e. to the King in the play then represented. The modern editors, following Mr. Theobald, read — *nephew to the Duke*, — though they have not followed that editor in substituting *Duke and Duchess*, for *King and Queen*, in the dumb show and subsequent entrance. There is no need of departing from the old copies.

MALONE.

P. 74, first l. *You are as good as a chorus.*] The use to which Shakspeare converted the *chorus*, may be seen in *King Henry V.* HENLEY.

P. 74, l. 2. 3. *I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.*] This refers to the interpreter, who formerly sat on the stage at all motions or puppet-shows, and interpreted to the audience.

P. 74, l. 7. *Still better, and worse.*] i. e. better in regard to the wit of your double entendre.

but worse in respect to the grossness of your meaning. STEEVENS.

P. 74, l. 8. *So you mistake your husbands.]* Read — *So you must take your husbands; that is, for better, for worse.* JOHNSON.

Mr. Theobald proposed the same reading in his *Shakspeare Restored*, however he lost it afterwards.

STEEVENS.

So you mistake your husbands.] I believe this to be right: the word is sometimes used in this ludicrous manner. "Your true trick, rascal, (says Ursula in *Bartholomew Fair*,) must be to be ever busie, and *mistake* away the bottles and cans, before they be half drunk off." FARMER.

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Augurs*: "—— To *mistake* six torches from the chandry, and give them one." STEEVENS.

I believe the meaning is — you do amiss for yourself to take husbands for the worse. You should take them only for the better. TOLLET.

P. 74, l. 16. *Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,]* The force of the epithet — *midnight*, will be best displayed by a corresponding passage in *Macbeth*:

"Root of hemlock, digg'd i'the dark."

STEEVENS.

P. 74, last l. — a forest of *feathers,]* It appears from Decker's *Guls Hornebooke*, that feathers were much worn on the stage in Shakspeare's time.

MALONE.

I believe, since the English stage began, feathers were worn by every company of players that could afford to purchase them. STEEVENS.

P. 75, first l. — (*if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me.])* This expression has no

curred already in *Much Ado about Nothing*, and I have met with it in several old comedies.

Perhaps the phrase had its rise from some popular story like that of *Ward* and *Dansiker*, the two famous pirates; an account of whose overthrow was published by A. Barker, 1609; and, in 1612, a play was written on the same subject called *A Christian turn'd Turk*. STEEVENS.

P. 75 l. 2. — *with two Provencial roses o. my razed shoes.* | Old copies — *provincial*. Wh provincial roses? Undoubtedly we should read *Provencial*, or (with the French ç) *Provençale*. He means roses of *Provence*, a beautiful species of rose, and formerly much cultivated.

T. WARTON

They are still more cultivated than any other flower of the same tribe. STEEVENS.

When shoe-strings were worn, they were covered, where they met in the middle, by a ribband, gathered in the form of a rose. So, in a old song:

“Gil de-Roy was a bonny boy,

“Had roses tull his shoon.” JOHNSON

These roses are often mentioned by our ancient dramatick writers.

So, in *The Devil's Law-case*, 1623:

“With over blown roses to hide you
gouty ancles.”

Again, in *The Roaring Girl*, 1611; “—— man handsome legs in silk stockings have villainous splay-feet, for all their great roses.”

The reading of the quartos is *raz'd shoes*; that of the folio *rac'd shoes*. *Razed shoes*, may mean *slashed shoes*, i. e. with cuts or openings in them. The poet might have written *raised shoes*, i. shoes with high heels; such as by adding to

stature; are supposed to increase the dignity of a player. In Stubbs's *Anatomic of Abuses*, 1595, there is a chapter on the *corked shoes* in England, "which (he says) beare them up two inches or more from the ground, &c. some of red, blacke, &c. razed, carved, cut, and stitched," &c.

Mr. Pope reads—*rayed shoes*, i. e. (as interpreted by Dr. Johnson) "*shoes braided in lines*." Stowe's *Chronicle*, anno 1353, mentions women's hoods *reyed* or striped. *Rais* is the French word for a stripe. Johnson's *Collection of Ecclesiastical Laws* informs us, under the years 1222 and 1553, that in disobedience of the canon, the clergy's shoes were *checquered* with red and green, exceeding long, and variously pinked. STEEVENS.

P. 75, l. 2. 3. — get me a fellowship in a *cry of players*,] Allusion to a pack of hounds.

WARBURTON.

A *pack* of hounds was once called a *cry* of hounds. STEEVENS.

A troop or company of players. MALONE.

P. 75, l. 5. *A whole one, I.*] It should be, I think,

A whole one;—ay,—

For, &c.

The actors in our author's time had not annual salaries as at present. The whole receipts of each theatre were divided into shares, of which the proprietors of the theatre, or *house-keepers* as they were called, had some; and each actor had one or more shares, or part of a share, according to his merit. See *The Account of the Ancient Theatres*.

MALONE.

A whole one, I, in familiar language, means no more than—I think myself entitled to a whole one. STEEVENS.

[P. 75, l. 6. — O *Damon dear*,] Hamlet calls Horatio by this name, in allusion to the celebrated friendship between *Damon* and *Pythias*. A play on this subject was written by Richard Edwards, and published in 1582. STEEVENS.

The friendship of *Damon* and *Pythias* is also enlarged upon in a book that was probably very popular in Shakspeare's youth, Sir Thomas Eliot's *Governour*, 1553. MALONE.

P. 75, l. 7-9. This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very — *peacock*.] This alludes to a fable of the birds choosing a King; instead of the eagle, a *peacock*. POPE.

The old copies have it *paiock*, *paicocks*, and *pajocke*. I substitute *paddock*, as nearest to the traces of the corrupted reading. I have, as Mr. Pope says, been willing to substitute any thing in the place of his *peacock*. He thinks a fable alluded to, of the birds choosing a King; instead of the eagle, a *peacock*. I suppose, he must mean the fable of Barlandus, in which it is said, the birds, being weary of their state of anarchy, moved for the setting up of a King; and the *peacock* was elected on account of his gay feathers. But, with submission, in this passage of our Shakspeare, there is not the least mention made of the eagle in antithesis to the *peacock*; and it must be by a very uncommon figure, that Jove himself stands in the place of his *bird*. I think, Hamlet is setting his father's and uncle's characters in contrast to each other: and means to say, that by his father's death the state was stripped of a godlike monarch, and that now in his stead reign'd the most despicable poisonous animal that could be; a mere *paddock* or toad. PAD, bufo, rubeta

per, a toad. This word I take to be of Hamlet's own substituting. The verses, repeated, seem to be from some old ballad; in which, rhyming being necessary, I doubt not but the last verse ran thus:

A very, very — ass. THEOBALD.

A peacock seems proverbial for a fool. Thus, in *Weeds*:

"A theefe, a cowarde, and a *peacocke* foole." FARMER.

In the last scene of this act, Hamlet, speaking to the King, uses the expression which Theobald would introduce:

"Would from a *paddock*, from a bar,
a jib,

"Such dear concernments hide?"

The reading, *peacock*, which I believe to be the true one, was first introduced by Mr. Pope.

Mr. Theobald is unfaithful in his account of the 1 copies. No copy of authority reads — *paicocke*. The quarto, 1604, has *paiocke*; the folio, 1623, *iocke*.

Shakspeare, I suppose; means, that the King puts about with a false pomp, to which he has right. See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1568: *Pavonnegiare*. To jet up and down, fondly zing upon himself, as a peacock doth." MALONE. P. 75, l. 18. 19. *For if the King like not the comedy,*

Why then, belike, —] Hamlet was going on to draw the consequence, when the courtiers entered. JOHNSON.

P. 75, l. 19. *Perdy* is a corruption of *par Dieu*, *dis* not uncommon on the old plays. STEVENSON. P. 75, l. 20. *With drink,*] Hamlet takes *par*

ticular care that his uncle's love of drink shall *not* be forgotten. JOHNSON.

P. 76, l. 27. — *further trade* —] Further business; further dealing. JOHNSON.

P. 76, l. 29. — *by these pickers and stealers.*] By these hands. JOHNSON.

By these hands, says Dr. Johnson; and rightly. But the phrase is taken from our church catechism, where the catechumen, in his duty to his neighbour, is taught to keep his hands from *picking and stealing*. WHALLEY.

P. 77, first l. *While the grass grows,*] The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578:

"Whylst grass doth growe, oft sterves
the seely steede."

Hamlet means to intimate, that whilst he is waiting for the succession to the throne of Denmark, he may himself be taken off by death. MALONE.

P. 77, l. 3. *Recorders.*] i. e. a kind of large slate.

To *record* anciently signified to sing or modulate. STEEVENS.

P. 77, l. 4. 5. *To withdraw with you:*] These last words have no meaning, as they stand; yet none of the editors have attempted to amend them. They were probably spoken to the players, whom Hamlet wished to get rid of: — I therefore should suppose that we ought to read, "so, withdraw you;" or, "so withdraw, will you?" M. MASON.

Here Mr. Malone adds the following stage direction: — [*Taking Guildenstern aside.*] But the foregoing obscure words may refer to some *gesture* which Guildenstern had used, and which, at first was interpreted by Hamlet into a signal for him to attend the speaker into another room. "To

withdraw with you?" (says he) Is that your meaning? But finding his friends continue to move mysteriously about him, he adds, with some resentment, a question more easily intelligible.

STEVENS.

P. 77, l. 8. 9. — *if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.*] i. e. if my duty to the King makes me press you a little, my love to you makes me still more importunate. If that makes me *bold*, this makes me even *unmannerly*.

WARBURTON.

I believe we should read — *my love is not unmannerly*. My conception of this passage is, that, in consequence of Hamlet's moving to take the recorder, Guildenstern also shifts his ground, in order to place himself *beneath* the Prince in his new position. This Hamlet ludicrously calls "*going about to recover the wind*," &c. and Guildenstern may answer properly enough, I think, and like a courtier; "*if my duty to the King makes me too bold in pressing you upon a disagreeable subject, my love to you will make me not unmannerly*, in shewing you all possible marks of respect and attention. TYRWHITT.

P. 77, l. 17. — *ventages* —] The holes of a sieve. JOHNSON.

P. 77, l. 18. — *with your fingers and thumb,*] the first quarto reads — *with your fingers and thumb*. This may probably be the ancient name for that piece of moveable brass at the end of a flute which is either raised or depressed by finger. The word *umber* is used by Stow's chronicler, who, describing a single combat between two knights — says, "he braist up his umber three times." Here, the umber means the visor helmet. STEVENS.

If a *recorder* had a brass key like the *Flute*, we are to follow the reading of the for then the thumb is not concerned in the government of the ventages or stops. If a *r* was like a *tabourer's pipe*, which has a key, but has a stop for the thumb, we read—*Govern these ventages with your thumb*. In Cotgrave's Dictionary, *ombraire*, *ombriere*, and *ombrelle*, are all from Latin *umbra*, and signify a shadow, an umbrage, or any thing that shades or hides the face from the sun; and hence they may have been applied to any thing that hides or covers another. For example, they may have been applied to the key that covers the hole in the German flute. Spenser used *umbriere* for the visor of the helmet, as Rous's *History of the Kings of England* uses *umbrella* in the same sense. TOLLET.

P. 77, l. 20. — these are the stops.] The instrument is formed by occasionally stopping the holes of the instrument is played upon. MALONE.

P. 78, l. 3-7. *Ham.* Do you see yonder that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel,

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.] The age has been printed in modern editions thus.

Ham. Methinks, it is like an ousel.

Pol. It is black like an ousel.

The first folio reads, — *It is like a weasel*.

Pol. It is back'd like a weasel —:

On occasion for alteration there was, I cannot say. The weasel is remarkable for the black on its back; but though I believe a black weasel is not easy to be found, yet it is as like

cloud should resemble a *weasel* in shape, as an *ouze* (i. e. black-bird) in colour.

Mr. Tollet observes, that we might read — “it is *beck'd* like a weasel,” i. e. weasel-snouted. So, in *Holinshed's Description of England*, p. 172: “if he be *wesell-becked*.” Quarles uses this term of reproach in his *Virgin Widow*: “Go you *weazel-snouted*, *addle-pated*,” &c. Mr. Tollet adds, that Milton in his *Lycidas*, calls a promontory *beaked*, i. e. prominent like the *beak* of a bird, or a ship. STEEVENS.

Ham. *Methinks it is like a weazel.*

Pol. *It is back'd like a weazel.*] Thus the quarto, 1604, and the folio. In a more modern quarto, that of 1611, *back'd* the original reading, was corrupted into *black*.

Perhaps in the original edition the words *camel* and *weazel* were shuffled out of their places. The poet might have intended the dialogue to proceed thus:

“Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in the shape of a *weazel*?

“Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a weazel, indeed.

“Ham. Methinks, it is like a *camel*.

“Pol. It is back'd like a *camel*.

The protuberant back of a camel seems more to resemble a cloud than the back of a weazel does.

MALONE.

P. 78, l. 11. *They fool me to the top of my bent.*] They compel me to play the fool, till I can endure it no longer. JOHNSON.

Perhaps a term in archery: i. e. as far as the bow will admit of being bent without breaking. BOUR.

P. 78, l. 20. 21. *And do such business*
bitter day

Would quake to look on.] The expression *bitter business* is still in use, and though a vulgar phrase, might not have been in the age of Shakspeare. The *bitter day* is thus rendered hateful or *bitter* by the commission of some act of mischief.

Watts, in his *Logick*, says, "*Bitter* is an vocal word; there is *bitter* wormwood, the *bitter* words, there are *bitter* enemies, and *ter* cold morning." It is, in short, any thing pleasing or hurtful. STEEVENS.

P. 78, l. 26. *I will speak daggers to h*
similar expression occurs in *The Return to Parnassus*, 1606: "They are pestilent for they speak nothing but *bodkins*." It has been already observed, that a *bodkin* anciently signifies a *short dagger*. STEEVENS.

P. 78, l. 28. How in my words soever
shent,] To *sh*
to reprove harshly, to treat with rough language. STEEVENS.

Shent seems to mean something more than proof, by the following passage from *The Mirror for Magistrates*: Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, is the speaker, and he relates his betrayal of the Duke of Gloucester and his comrades to the King, "for which (says he) they all tane and *shent*." —

Hamlet surely means, "however my life may be hurt, wounded, or punish'd, by my father, let me never consent" &c. HENDERSON.

P. 78, l. 29. To give them seals
them in execution. WARBURTON.

P. 79, l. 6. Out of his *lunes*.] The folio — reads *lunacies*; — and the old quartos — read *brows*:

I take *brows* to be, properly read, *frows*, which, I think, is a provincial word for *perverse humours*; which being, I suppose, not understood, was changed to *lunacies*. But of this I am not confident. JOHNSON.

The two readings of *brows* and *lunes* — when taken in connection with the passages referred to by Mr. Steevens, in *The Winter's Tale* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, plainly figure forth the image under which the King apprehended danger from Hamlet: — viz. that of a bull, which, in his frenzy, might not only gore, but push him from his throne. — “The hazard that hourly grows out of his *BROWS*” (according to the quartos) corresponds to “*the shoots from the rough pash*,” that is *the tufted protuberance on the head of a bull, from whence his horns spring*] alluded to in *The Winter's Tale*; whilst the imputation of impending danger to “*his LUNES*” (according to the other reading) answers as obviously to the jealousy of the husband that thinks he has detected the infidelity of his wife. Thus, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*: “Why woman, your husband is in his old *lunes* — he so takes on you — with my husband; so rails against all married kind; so curses all Eve's daughters, and so sets himself on the *forehead*, crying peer out! out! that any *madness*, I ever yet beheld, 'd but tameness, civility, and patience, to this uper he is now in.” HENLEY.

79, l. 32. Behind the arras I'll convey myself,] The arras — in Shakspeare's time, were hung at such

a distance from the walls, that a person might stand behind them unperceived. MALONE. P. 80, l. 4. — *of vantage.*] By some impunity of secret observation. WARBURTON P. 80, l. 11. *Though inclination be as*
as will;] Dr

burton would read,

Though inclination be as sharp
th' ill.

The old reading is — *as sharp as will.* ST

I have followed the easier emendation Theobald, received by Sir T. Hammer: 'twill. JOHNSON.

Will is command, direction. Thus, *Ecsticus*, xliii. 16: "—and at his *will* the wind bloweth." The King says, his mind is in great confusion to pray, even though his intention were as strong as the command which requires that duty. STEEVENS.

What the King means to say, is, "That he was not only *willing* to pray, but strongly inclined to it; yet his intention was defeated by guilt. M. MASON.

P. 80, l. 28: *May one be pardon'd, and*
the offence?]

does not amend what can be amended, *redeem* the offence. The King kept the crown from his heir. JOHNSON.

A similar passage occurs in *Philaster*, the King, who had usurped the crown of Sicily and is praying to heaven for forgiveness, says

"—But how can I

"Look to be heard of gods, that I

"Praying upon the ground I

"Am wrong." M

P. 81, l. 2. *Yet what can it, when one can not repent?*] *What can repentance do for a man that cannot be penitent, for a man who has only part of penitence, distress of conscience, without the other part, resolution of amendment?* JOHNSON.

P. 81, l. 4. *O limed soul;*] This alludes to *bird-lime*. STEEVENS.

P. 81, l. 13. *That would be scann'd:*] i. e. that should be considered, estimated. STEEVENS.

P. 81, l. 18. — *full of bread;*] The uncommon expression, *full of bread*, our poet borrowed from the sacred writings: "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, *fullness of bread*, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." *Ezekiel*, xvi. 49.

MALONE,

P. 81, l. 20. — *how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?*]]

As it appears from the Ghost's own relation that he was in *purgatory*, Hamlet's doubt could only be how long he had to continue there. RITSON.

P. 81, l. 26. *Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:*] To *hent* is used by Shakspeare for, to *seize*, to *catch* to *lay hold on*. *Hent* is, therefore, *hold*, or *seizure*. *Lay hold on* him, sword, at a more horrid time. JOHNSON.

P. 81, l. 32. 35. — *that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,*

As hell, whereto it goes.] This speech, in which Hamlet, represented as a virtuous character, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he

would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered. JOHNSON.

This speech of Hamlet's, as Johnson observes, is horrible indeed; yet some moral may be extracted from it, as all his subsequent calamities were owing to this savage refinement of revenge.

M. MASON.

That a sentiment so infernal should have met with imitators, may excite surprize; and yet the same fiend-like disposition is shown by Lodowick, in Webster's *White Devil*, or *Vittoria Corombona*, 1612:

"——to have poison'd

"The handle of his racket: O, that;
that! —

"That while he had been bandying at
tennis,

"He might have sworn himself to hell,
and struck

"*His soul into the hazard!*" STEEVENS.

I think it not improbable, that when Shakspeare put this horrid sentiment into the mouth of Hamlet, he might have recollected the following story: "One of these monsters meeting his enemy unarmed, threatened to kill him, if he denied not God, his power, and essential properties, viz. his mercy, suffrance, &c. the which, when the other, desiring life, pronounced with great horror, kneeling upon his knees; the bravo cried out, *nowe will I kill thy body and soule*, and at that instant thrust him through with his rapier." *Brief Discourse of the Spanish State, with a Dialogue annexed intitled Philobasilis*, 4to. 1590, p. 24. REED.

P. 82, l. 14. *I'll silence me even here,* &c. *I'll use no more words.* JOHNSON.

It has been doubted whether Shakspeare intended to represent the Queen as accessary to the murder of her husband. The surprize she here expresses at the charge seems to tend to her exculpation. Where the variation is not particularly marked, we may presume, I think, that the poet intended to tell his story as it had been told before. The following extract therefore from *The History of Hamlet*, bl. l. relative to this point, will probably not be unacceptable to the reader: "Fengon [the King in the present play] boldened and encouraged by such impunitie, durst venture to couple himself in marriage with her, whom he used as his concubine during good Horvendille's life; in that sort spotting his name with a double vice, incestuous adulterie, and paracide murther.— This adulterer and infamous murtherer slandered his dead brother, that he would have slaine

ser of the murther, thereby to live in her adulterie without controule." *Hist. of Hamb.* sig. C. 1.

In the conference however with her son, to which the present sense is founded, she strongly asserts her innocence with respect to this fact:

"I know well, my sonne, that I have done thee great wrong in marrying with Fengon, the cruel tyrant and murtherer of thy father, and my loyal spouse; but when thou shalt consider the small means of resistance, and the treason of the palace, with the little cause of confidence we are to expect, or hope for, of the courtiers, all wrought to his will; as also the power he made ready, I should have refused to like him; thou wouldst rather excuse, than accuse me of lasciviousness, inconstancy, much less offer me that wrong: I suspect that ever thy mother Geruth once consented to the death and murther of her husband: swearing unto thee by the majestic of the gods, that if it had layne in me to have resisted the tyrant, although it had bene with the loss of my blood, yea and of my life, I would surely have saved the life of my lord and husband." *Ibid.* sig. D. 4.

It is observable, that in the drama neither the King or Queen make so good a defence. Shakspeare wished to render them as odious as he could, and therefore has not in any part of the play furnished them with even the semblance of an excuse for their conduct.

Though the inference already mentioned may be drawn from the surprize which our poet has here made the Queen express at being charged with the murder of her husband, it is observable that when the player-queen in the preceding scene says,

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"In second husband let me be accurst!
"None wed the second, but *who kills*
the first,"

he has made Hamlet exclaim — "*that's worms-wood.*" The Prince, therefore, both from the expression and the words addressed to his mother in the present scene, must be supposed to think her guilty. — Perhaps after all this investigation, the truth is, that Shakspeare himself meant to leave the matter in doubt. MALONE.

I know not in what part of this tragedy the King and Queen could have been expected to enter into a vindication of their mutual conduct. The former indeed is rendered contemptible as well as guilty; but for the latter our poet seems to have felt all that tenderness which the Ghost recommends to the imitation of her son. STEEVENS.

Had Shakspeare thought fit to have introduced the topics I have suggested, can there be a doubt concerning his ability to introduce them? The King's justification, if to justify him had been the poet's object, (which it certainly was not,) might have been made in a soliloquy; the Queen's, in the present interview with her son. MALONE.

It might not unappositely be observed, that every new commentator, like Sir T. Hanmer's Othello, must often "*make the meat he feeds on.*" Some slight objection to every opinion already offered, may be found; and, if in doubtful cases we are to presume that "the poet tells his stories as they have been told before," we must put new constructions on many of his scenes, as well as new comments on their verbal obscurities. For instance — touching the manner in which Hamlet disposed of Polonius's body. The black-history tells us he "cut it in pieces, which

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he caused to be boiled, and then cast it into an open vault or privie." Are we to conclude therefore that he did so in the play before us, because our author has left the matter doubtful? Hamlet; is only made to tell us that this dead counsellor was "safely stowed." He afterwards adds "—you shall *nose* him" &c.; all which might have been the case, had the direction of the aforesaid history been exactly followed. In this transaction then (which I call a doubtful one, because the remains of Polonius might have been rescued from the *forica*, and afterwards have received their "hugger-mugger" funeral) am I at liberty to suppose he had had the fate of Heliogabalus, *in cloacam missus*?

That the Queen (who may still be regarded as innocent of murder) might have offered some apology for her "over-hasty marriage," can easily be supposed; but Mr. Malone has not suggested what defence could have been set up by the royal fratricide. My acute predecessor, as well as the novellist, must have been aware that though female weakness, and an offence against the form of the world, will admit of extenuation, such as that of the usurper, could not have been palliated by the dramatick art of Shakspeare; ever the father of Hamlet had been represented as a wise instead of a virtuous character. STEVENS.

P. 84, l. 8. g. — *takes off the rose*

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,] Alludin

the custom of wearing roses on the side of the face. WARBURTON.

I believe Dr. Warburton is mistaken; for it be allowed that there is a material difference between an ornament worn on the forehead

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ted on *the side of the face*. Some have stood these words to be only a metaphorical *ement* of the sentiment contained in the preceding line:

“—blurs the grace and *blush* of modesty:”

as the *forehead* is no proper situation for a to be displayed in, we may have recourse to other explanation.

was once the custom for those who were betrothed, to wear some flower as an external and *icuous* mark of their mutual engagement.

STEVENS.

believe, by the *rose* was only meant the *rosenhue*. The forehead certainly appears to us a good place for the hue of innocence to dwell in, but Shakspeare might place it there with as much propriety as a *smile*. In *Troilus and Cressida* we find these lines:

“So rich advantage of a promis’d glory,
“As *smiles* upon the *forehead* of this action.”

that part of the forehead which is situated between the eye-brows, seems to have been considered by our poet as the seat of innocence and modesty. In a subsequent scene:

“——brands the harlot,
“Even here, between the *chaste* unsmirched brow

“Of my true mother.” MALONE.

In the foregoing quotation from *Troilus and Cressida*, I understand that the *forehead* is *smiled* by advantage, and not that the *forehead* is itself the *smiler*. Thus, says LACTES in the preceding scene:

“Occasion *smiles* upon a second leaver.”

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it is not the *leave* that smiles, but occasion smiles upon it.

In the subsequent passage, our author had no voice; for having alluded to that part of the face which was anciently branded with a mark of shame, he was compelled to place his token of innocence in a corresponding situation. STEEVENS.

P. 84, l. 12. *Contraction for marriage contract.* WARBURTON.

P. 84, l. 14-17. — *Heaven's face doth glow; Yea, this solidity and compound mass,*

With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.] If any sense can be found here, it is this. The sun glows [and does it not always?] and the very solid mass of earth has a tristful visage, and is thought-sick. All this is sad stuff. The old quarto reads much nearer to the poet's sense:

*Heaven's face does glow,
O'er this solidity and compound mass
With heated visage, as against the doom.*

Is thought-sick at the act.
From whence it appears, that Shakspeare wrote
*Heaven's face doth glow,
O'er this solidity and compound mass
With tristful visage; and, as 'gainst the doom,*

Is thought-sick at the act.
This makes a fine sense, and to this effect. The sun looks upon our globe, the scene of this play, with an angry and mournful countenance, hid in eclipse, as at the day of doom.

The word *heated*, though it agrees with *glow*, is, I think, not so striking

and, *Heaven's face is thought-sick*. To the common reading there is no just objection. Johnson

I am strongly inclined to think that the first of the quarto, 1604, is the true one. In Spenser's licentious diction, the meaning may be, *The face of heaven doth glow with heated beams over the earth: and heaven, as against the day of judgement, is thought-sick at the act.*

Had not our poet St. Luke's description of the last day in his thoughts? — "And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring: men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking on these things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken," &c. MALONE P. 84, l. 18. 19. — *what act,*

That roars so loud, and thunders in the index? The meaning is, — *What is this act, of which the discovery, the mention, cannot be made, but with this violence of clamour?* JOHNSON.

Mr. Edwards observes, that the *indexes* of many old books were at that time inserted in the margin, instead of the —

an *Index* by "A *table* in a booke." was almost always *prefixed* to the book of poet's age. Indexes, in the sense in which we understand the word, were very uncommon.

P. 84, l. 20. *Look here, upon this picture, and on this*
evident from the following words,

"A *station*, like the herald's mouth, that these pictures, which are introduced on the stage, were meant for what being part of the furniture of the Queen's chamber."

Hamlet, who, in a former scene, had given those who gave "forty, fifty, a hundred pieces" for his uncle's "picture in little," hardly have condescended to carry such a picture in his pocket. STREEVENS.

The introduction of miniatures in this play appears to be a modern innovation. A note fixed to Rowe's edition of *Hamlet*, printed in 1709, proves this. There, the two royal portraits are exhibited as half-lengths, hanging in a closet; and either thus, or as whole-lengths, probably were exhibited from the time of the original performance of this tragedy to the present. To half-lengths, however, no objection lies, as to miniatures. MALONE.

We may also learn, that from this trick of kicking the chair down on the back of the Ghost, was adopted by modern actors from the practice of their predecessors.

P. 84, l. 24. *Hyperion's curls; the*
Jove himself
observable that *Hyperion* is used by Shakespeare with the same error in quantity. FARMER.

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P. 84, l. 26. *A station like the herald Mercury,*] *Station* in this instance does not mean *the spot where any one is placed*, but *the act of standing*. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III. sc. iii.

“Her motion and her station are as one.”

On turning to Mr. Theobald's first edition, I find that he had made the same remark, and supported it by the same instance. The observation is necessary, for otherwise the compliment designed to the attitude of the King, would be bestowed on the place where Mercury is represented as standing.

STEEVENS.

P. 84, l. 33. 34. — *like a mildew'd ear,*

Blasting his wholesome brother.] This alludes to *Pharaoh's Dream*, in the 41st chapter of *Genesis*. STEEVENS.

P. 84, last l. — *batten* —] i. e. to grow fat.

Bat is an ancient word for *increase*. Hence the adjective *batful*, so often used by Drayton in his *Polyolbion*. STEEVENS.

P. 85, l. 7. *Else, could you not have motion:]* But from what philosophy our editors learnt this, I cannot tell. Since *motion* depends so little upon *sense*, that the greatest part of *motion* in the universe, is amongst bodies devoid of *sense*. We should read :

Else, could you not have notion,
i. e. intellect, reason, &c. This alludes to the famous peripatetic principle of *Nil fit in intellectu, quod non fuerit in sensu*. And how fond our author was of applying, and alluding to, the principles of this philosophy, we have given several instances. The principle in particular has been since taken for the foundation of one of the noblest

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works that these latter ages have produced.

The whole passage is wanting in the folio; and which soever of the readings be the true one, the poet was not indebted to this boasted philosophy for his choice. STEEVENS.

Sense is sometimes used by Shakspeare for sensation or *sensual appetite*; as *motion* is for the effect produced by the impulse of nature. Such, I think, is the signification of these words here. MALONE.

P. 85, l. 13. — *hoodman-blind?*] This is, I suppose, the same as *blindman's-buff*. STEEVENS.

P. 85, l. 17. *Could not so mope.*] i. e. could not exhibit such marks of stupidity. STEEVENS.

P. 85, l. 19. *If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,*] To

mutine for which the modern editors have substituted *mutiny*, was the ancient term, signifying a rise in *mutiny*. MALONE.

P. 85, l. 24. — *reason panders will.*] So, the folio, I think rightly; but the reading of the quarto is defensible: — *reason pardons will.* JOHNSON.

Panders was certainly Shakspeare's word. MALONE.

P. 85, l. 27. *And there I see such black & grained spots,*] I

in grain. JOHNSON.

I am not quite certain that the epithet — *grained* is justly interpreted. Our author employs the same adjective in *The Comedy of Errors*: "Though now this grained face of be hid," &c.

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and in this instance the allusion is most certainly to the furrows in the *grain* of wood.

Shakspeare might therefore design the Queen to say, that her spots of guilt were not merely superficial, but indented. — A passage, however, in *Twelfth Night*, will sufficiently authorize Dr. Johnson's explanation: "Tis in grain, Sir, 'twill endure wind and weather." STEEVENS.

P. 85, l. 28. *As will not leave their tinct.*] To leave is to part with, give up, resign.

STEEVENS.

P. 85, l. 30. *In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed;*] Thus the folio: i. e. greasy bed. JOHNSON.

Thus also the quarto, 1604. Beaumont and Fletcher use the word *inseamed* in the same sense, in the third of their *Four Plays in One*:

"His leachery *inseam'd* upon him."

In *The Book of Haukyng*, &c. bl. l. no date, we are told that "*Ensayme* of a hauke is the *ece*."

In some places it means hogs' yard, in others, grease or oil with which clothiers besmear their cloth to make it draw out in spinning.

incestuous is the reading of the quarto, 1611.

STEEVENS.

the West of England, the *inside fat* of a hog, when dissolved by heat, is called its *seam*.

HENLEY.

86, l. 2. — *a vice of Kings:*] A low misnomer of Kings. The vice is the fool of a farce; whence the modern *punch* is descended.

JOHNSON.

87, l. 4. *That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,*] This is not unmeaningly, but to show, that the

usurper came not to the crown by any glorious villainy that carried danger with it, but by the low cowardly theft of a common pilferer.

WARBURTON.

P. 86, l. 8. 9. A King

Of shreds and patches:] This is said, pursuing the idea of the *vice of Kings*. The *vice* was dressed as a fool, in a coat of party-coloured patches. JOHNSON.

P. 86, l. 15. *That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go &c.*] *That, having suffered time to slip, and passion to cool, lets go, &c.* JOHNSON.

P. 86, l. 22. *Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works;*] *Conceit for imagination.*

P. 86, l. 30. *Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,*] The hairs are excrementitious, that is, without life or sensation; yet those very hairs, as if they had life, start up, &c. POPE.

Not only the hair of animals having neither life nor sensation was called an *excrement*, but the feathers of birds had the same appellation. Thus, in Walton's *Complete Angler*, P. I, c. i. p. 9, edit. 1766: "I will not undertake to mention the several kinds of fowl by which this is done, and his curious palate pleased by day; and which, with their very *excrements*, afford him a soft lodging at night. WHALLEY.

P. 87, l. 1. 2. — *preaching to stones, Would make them capable.*] *Capable* here signifies *intelligent*; endued with understanding.

We yet use capacity in this sense. MALONE.

P. 87, l. 5. *My stern effects:*] *Effects* for actions; deeds effected. MALONE.

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P. 87, l. 14. *My father, in his habit as he liv'd!]* If the poet means by this expression, that his father appeared in his own *familiar habit*, he has either forgot that he had originally introduced him in *armour*, or must have meant to vary his dress at this his last appearance. The difficulty might perhaps be a little obviated by pointing the line thus:

My father—in his habit—as he liv'd!

STEEVENS.

A man's armour, who is used to wear it, may be called his *habit*, as well as any other kind of clothing. *As he lived*, probably means — "as if he were alive — as if he lived." M. MASON.

P. 87, l. 18. *This bodiless creation ecstasy]* *Ecstasy* in this place, and many others, means a temporary alienation of mind, a fit. STEEVENS.

P. 87, l. 33. *And do not spread the compost on the weeds,]* Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences. JOHNSON.

P. 88, l. 2. — *curb and woo,]* That is, *bend and truckle*. Fr. *courber*. STEEVENS.

P. 88, l. 9. 10. *That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat*

Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this; etc.] This passage is left out in the two elder folios: it is certainly corrupt, and the players did the discreet part to stifle what they did not understand. *Habit's devil* certainly arose from some conceited tamperer with the text, who thought it was necessary, in contrast to *angel*. The emendation in my text I owe to the sagacity of Dr. Thirlby:

That monster custom, who all sense doth eat

Of habit's evil, is angel, &c. THORNTON.

I think Thirlby's conjecture wrong, though succeeding editors have followed it; *angel* & *devil* are evidently opposed. JOHNSON.

I incline to think with Dr. Thirlby; though have left the text undisturbed. From *That monster to put on*, is not in the folio. MALONE.

I would read — *Or habit's devil*. The poet styles *Custom* a *monster*, and may aggravate & amplify his description by adding, that it is a "daemon who presides over habit." — That monster custom, or habit's devil, is yet an angel this particular. STEEVENS.

P. 88, l. 23. *To punish me with this, and this with me,*]
punish me by making me the instrument of a man's death, and to punish this man by my ban. For this, the reading of both the quarto, and folio, Sir T. Hanmer and the subsequent editors have substituted,

To punish *him with me*, and *me with him*. MALONE.

I take leave to vindicate the last editor of octavo Shakspeare from any just share in the foregoing accusation. Whoever looks into the edition 1785, will see the line before us printed exactly as in this and Mr. Malone's text. — In seven preceding instances a similar censure on the last gentleman has been as undeservedly implied.

STEEVENS

P. 88, l. 52. — *the bloat King*] i. e. the swollen King. MALONE.

This again hints at his intemperance. He has already drank himself into a droyty.

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The folio reads—*blunt* King. HENDERSON.
P. 88, l. 33. *Mouse* was once a term of endearment. STEVENS.

This term of endearment is very ancient.

MALONE.

P. 88, l. 34. — for a pair of *reechy* kisses,] *Reechy* is smoky. The author meant to convey a coarse idea, and was not very scrupulous in his choice of an epithet. The same, however, is applied with greater propriety to the neck of a cook-maid in *Coriolanus*. STEVENS.

Reechy properly means *steaming with exsudation*, and seems to have been selected, to convey, in this place, its grossest import. HENLEY.

Reechy includes, I believe, *heat* as well as smoke. The verb to *reech*, which was once common, was certainly a corruption of—to *rest*. In a former passage Hamlet has remonstrated with his mother, on her living

“In the *rank sweat* of an enseamed
bed.” MALONE.

P. 89, l. 1. 2. *That I essentially am not in
madness,*

But mad in craft.] The reader will be pleased to see Dr. Farmer's extract from the old quarto *Historie of Hamblet*, of which he had a fragment only in his possession. — “It was not without cause, and just occasion, that my gestures, countenances, and words, seeme to proceed from a madman, and that I desire to haue all men esteeme mee wholly deprived of sense and reasonable understanding, bycause I am well assured, that he that hath made no conscience to kill his owne brother, (accustomed to murders, and assured with desire of gouernement without controll in his reasons) will not spare to saue himselfe with

cloud, when she wether in summer-time
eth: the face of a madman serued to
gallant countenance, and the gestures of a
fit for me, to the end that, guiding myself
therin, I may preserve my life for the De
the memory of my late deceased father;
the desire of reuenging his death is so ingr
my heart, that if I dye not shortly, I
take such and so great vengeance, that thes
tryes shall for ener speake thereof. Neuer
I must stay the time, meanes, and occasion,
making ouergreat hast, I be now the cause
own sodaine ruine and overthrow, and
meanes end, before I beginne to effect my
desire: hee that hath to doe with a wicked,
all, cruel, and discourteous man, must v
and politike inuentions, such as a fine w
best imagine, not to discover his interpri

it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too." WARNER.

P. 89, l. 9. To try *conclusions*,] i. e. experiments. STEEVENS.

P. 89, l. 15. Ham. *I must to England*;) Shakspeare does not inform us how Hamlet came to know that he was to be sent to England. Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern were made acquainted with the King's intentions for the first time in the very last scene; and they do not appear to have had any communication with the Prince since that time. Add to this, that in a subsequent scene, when the King, after the death of Polonius, informs Hamlet he was to go to England, he expresses great surprize, as if he had not heard any thing of it before. — This last, however, may, perhaps, be accounted for, as contributing to his design of passing for a madman. MALONE.

P. 89, l. 20. Whom I will trust, as I will *adders fang'd*,] That is, adders with their *fangs* or *poisonous teeth*, undrawn. It has been the practice of mountebanks to boast the efficacy of their antidotes by playing with vipers, but they first disabled their fangs.

JOHNSON.

P. 89, l. 24. *Hoist*, for *hoised*; as *past*, for *passed*. STEEVENS.

P. 89, l. 27. *When in one line two crafts directly meet*.] Still alluding to a *countermine*. MALONE.

P. 89, l. 29. *I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room*:] The word *guts* was not anciently so offensive to delicacy as it is at present; but was used by LYN (who made the first attempt to polish our language) in his serious compositions. STEEVENS.

P. 89, l. 33. — *to draw toward a*
you:] Shakspeare has been unfortunate in his management of this play, the most striking circumstances which arise so early in its formation, leave him room for a conclusion suitable to the importance of its beginning. After this view with the Ghost, the character of Hamlet has lost all its consequence. STEEVENS.

P. 90, first l. This play is printed in editions without any separation of the act and scene; this division is modern and arbitrary; and very happy, for the pause is made at a place where there is more continuity of action than in any other of the scenes. JOHNSON.

P. 90, l. 27. 28. — *out of haunt*, rather read, — *out of harm*. JOHNSON.

Out of haunt, means out of company.

P. 91, l. 1-3. *O'er whom his ver*
like some

Among a mineral of metals base
Shows itself pure;] Shakspeare thinks *ore* to be *or*, that is, gold. *Ore* has not always had the same meaning. We have *ore* no less than precious. JOHNSON.

Shakspeare uses the general word *ore* for *gold*, because it was the most excellent. I suppose we should read "of *metal* base" for "of *metals*", which much improves the sense of the passage. M. MASON.

A *mineral* Minsheu defines in his 1617, "Any thing that grows in mines contains metals." Shakspeare seems to use the word in this sense, — for a *ruddy* *metals*. MALONE.

Minerals are mines. So, in The

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mains of Hales of Eton, 1693, p. 54: "Controversies of the times, like spirits in the *minerals*, with all their labour, nothing is done." STEEVENS.

P. 91, l. 18. — *so, haply, slander, &c.*] Neither these words, nor the following three lines and an half, are in the folio. In the quarto, 1604, and all the subsequent quartos, the passage stands thus:

"— And what's untimely done.

"Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter," &c.

P. 91, l. 20. As level as the cannon to his
blank,] The *blank*
was the white mark at which shot or arrows were directed. STEEVENS.

P. 92, l. 18. 19. *He keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw;*] The quarto has *apple*, which is generally followed. The folio has *ape*, which Sir T. Hanmer has received, and illustrated with the following note:

"It is the way of monkeys in eating, to throw that part of their food, which they take up first, into a couch they are provided with on each side of their jaw, and there they keep it, till they have done with the rest." JOHNSON.

Surely this should be "*like an ape, an apple.*"
FARMER.

The reading of the folio, *like an ape*, I believe to be the true one, because Shakespeare has the same phraseology in many other places. The word *ape* refers to the King, not to his courtiers. *He keeps them like an ape, in the corner of his jaw, &c.* means, he keeps them, *as an ape keeps food*, in the corner of his jaw, &c.

That the particular food in Shakespeare's contemplation was an *apple*, may be inferred from the

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following passage in *The Captain*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"And lie, and kiss my hand unto my
mistress,

"As often as *an ape does for an apple*."

I cannot approve of Dr. Farmer's reading. Had our poet meant to introduce both the ape and the apple, he would, I think, have written not *like*, but "*as an ape an apple*." MALONE.

Apple in the quarto is a mere typographical error. RITSON.

P. 92, l. 24. 25. *A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.*] This, if I mistake not, is a proverbial sentence. MALONE.

Since the appearance of our author's play, these words have become proverbial; but no earlier instance of the idea conveyed by them, has occurred within the compass of my reading. STEEVENS.

P. 92, l. 28. 29. *The body is with the King, but the King is not with the body.*] This answer I do not comprehend. Perhaps it should be, — *The body is not with the King, for the King is not with the body.* JOHNSON.

Perhaps it may mean this, — The body is in the King's house, (i. e. the present King's,) yet the King (i. e. he who should have been King,) is not with the body. Intimating that the usurper is here, the true King in a better place. Or it may mean — *the guilt of the murder lies with the King*, but the King is *not where the body lies*. The affected obscurity of Hamlet must excuse so many attempts to procure something like a meaning. STEEVENS.

P. 92, last but one l. Of nothing:] Should it not be read — Or nothing? When the courtier remark that Hamlet has contemptuously called the

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King a thing, Hamlet defends himself by observing, that the King must be a *thing*, or *nothing*.

JOHNSON.

The text is right. So, in *The Spanish Tragedy*:

"In troth, my Lord, it is a *thing* of
nothing."

And, in one of Harvey's letters "a silly bug-beare, a sorry puffle of winde, a *thing* of *nothing*."

FARMER.

Mr. Steevens has given [i. e. edit. 1778] many parallelisms: but the origin of all is to be look'd for, I believe, in the 144th Psalm, ver. 5: "Man is like a *thing* of nought." Mr. Steevens must have observed, that the book of Common Prayer, and the translation of the Bible into English, furnished our old writers with many forms of expression, some of which are still in use. WHALLEY.

P. 92, last l. *Hide fox, and all after.*] There is a play among children called, *Hide fox, and all after*. HANMER.

P. 94, l. 10. 11. *Nothing, but to show you how a King may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.*] Alluding to the royal journeys of state, always styled *progresses*; a familiar idea to those who, like our author, lived during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I.

STEEVENS.

P. 94, l. 27. The bark is ready, and the wind
at help,] I suppose it
should be read,

*The bark is ready, and the wind at
helm.* JOHNSON.

— at help,] i. e. at hand, ready, — ready to
help or assist you. RITSON.

P. 95, l. 14. 15. — thou may'st not coldly

Our sovereign process:] I adhere to the reading of the quarto and folio. Mr. M. Mason serves, that "one of the common acceptation the verb *set*, is to value or estimate; as we say *set* at nought; and in that sense it is used here.

: STREVI.

Our poet has here, I think, as in many other places, used an elliptical expression: "thou shalt not coldly *set* by our sovereign process;" thou may'st not *set little by it*, or estimate it lightly. "To *set by*." Cole renders in his Dict. 1679, *aestimo*. "To *set little by*," he interprets *vi-facio*. See many other instances of similar ellipses, in Vol. XIII. p. 235, n. 5. MALONE.

P. 95, l. 16. *By letters conjuring to effect,*] *Effect* was formerly used for *act* or *deed*, simply, and is used in the line before us. MALONE.

P. 95, l. 20. *Howe'er my haps, my joys ne'er begin.*] being the termination of a scene, should accord to our authors's custom, be rhymed. Perhaps wrote,

Howe'er my hopes, my joys are not begun
If *haps* be retained, the meaning will be, *I know 'tis done, I shall be miserable, what befall me.* JOHNSON.

The folio reads, in support of Dr. Johnson's mark, —

Howe'er my haps, my joys were begun.

Mr. Heath would read:

Howe'er 't may hap, my joys will begin. STANLEY.

By his *haps*, he means his successes. His *time* was begun, but his joys were not. MALONE.

P. 95, l. 30. *We shall express our duty in his eye,*] The phrase appears to have been formulary. See *The Establishment of the Household of Prince Henry*, A. D. 1610: "Also the gentlemen-waier shall be careful to see and informe all such as doe service in the Prince's eye, that they performe their duties". &c. Again, in *The Regulations for the Government of the Queen's Household*, 1627: "——all such as doe service in the Queen's eye. STEVENS.

P. 96, last l. — *What is a man, If his chief good, and market of his time, Be but to sleep, and feed?*] If his highest good, and that for which he sells his time, be to sleep and feed. JOHNSON.

Market, I think, here means *profit*. MALONE.

P. 97, l. 2. 3. — with such large discourse, *Looking before, and after,*] Such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past, and anticipating the future. JOHNSON.

P. 97, l. 6. — *some craven scruple*] Some cowardly scruple. MALONE.

P. 97, l. 21-24. — *Rightly to be great, Is, not to stir without great argument; But greatly to find quarrel in a straw, When honour's at the stake.*] This passage I have printed according to the copy. Mr. Theobald had regulated it thus:

——'Tis not to be great,
Never to stir without great argument;
But greatly, &c.

The sentiment of Shakspeare is partly just, and partly romantick.

——*Rightly to be great,
Is, not to stir without great argument,*

is exactly philosophical,

*But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour's at the stake,*
is the idea of a modern hero. *But then,* says he,
honour is an argument, or subject of debate,
sufficiently great, and when honour is at stake,
we must find cause of quarrel in a straw.

JOHNSON.

P. 97, l. 26. *Excitements of my reason, and
my blood,*] Provoca-
tions which excite both my reason and my pas-
sions to vengeance. JOHNSON.

P. 97, l. 30. — *a plot*] A piece, or portion.

REED.

P. 97, l. 32. — *not tomb enough, and conti-
nent,*] *Continent*, in
our author, means that which comprehends or en-
closes. STEEVENS.

Again, Lord Bacon *on the Advancement of
Learning*, 4to. 1633, p. 7: "—— if there be no
fulness, then is the *continent* greater than the
content." REED.

P. 98, l. 12. *Spurns enviously at straws;*] *Envy*
is much oftener put by our poet (and those
of this time) for direct *aversion*, than for *malign-
ity conceived at the sight of another's excel-
lence or happiness*. STEEVENS.

P. 98, l. 13-15. — her speech is nothing,

Yet the unshaped use of it doth move

The hearers to collection;] i. e. to deduce
consequences from such premises; or as Mr. M.
Mason observes, "endeavour to collect some mean-
ing from them." STEEVENS.

P. 98, l. 19-21. — there might be thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.]
i. e. though her meaning cannot be certainly col-

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lected, yet there is enough to put a mischievous interpretation to it. **WARBURTON.**

That *unhappy* once signified *mischievous*, may be known from P. Holland's translation of *Pliny's Natural History*, Book XIX. ch. vii.: "—the shrewd and *unhappie* foules, which lie upon the lands, and eat up the seed new sowne." We still use *unlucky* in the same sense. **STEEVENS.**

P. 98, l. 22 et fol. Queen. [*'Twere good, &c.*] These lines are given to the Queen in the folio, and to Horatio in the quarto. **JOHNSON.**

I think the two first lines of Horatio's speech [*'Twere good, &c.*] belong to him; the rest to the Queen. **BLACKSTONE.**

In the quarto, the Queen, Horatio, and a *Gentleman*, enter at the beginning of this scene. The two speeches, "She is importunate," &c. and "She speaks much of her father," &c. are there given to the *Gentleman*, and the line now before us, as well as the two following, to *Horatio*: the remainder of this speech to the Queen. I think it probable that the regulation proposed by Sir W. Blackstone was that intended by Shakspeare. **MALONE.**

P. 98, l. 27. Each *toy*] is, each trifle.

MALONE.

P. 99, first l. et fol. There is no part of this play in its representation on the stage, more pathetic than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes.

A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathize. **Sir J. REYNOLDS.**

P. 99, l. 3. 4. *By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.*] This is the

description of a pilgrim. While this kind of vocation was in favour, love-intrigues were carried on under that mask. Hence the old ballads and novels made pilgrimages the subjects of their plots. The cockle-shell hat was one of the essential badges of this vocation: for the chief places of devotion being beyond sea, or on the coasts, the pilgrims were accustomed to put cockle-shells upon their hats, to denote the intention or performance of their devotion. WARBURTON.

P. 99, l. 18. *Larded all with sweet flows.* The expression is taken from cookery. JOHNSON.

P. 99, l. 22. *God'ield you!]* i. e. Heaven reward you! THEOBALD.

P. 99, l. 22. 25. — *the owl was a baker's daughter.]* This is a metamorphosis of the common people, arising from the mealy appearance of the owl's feet and her guarding the bread from mice.

WARBURTON. To guard the bread from mice, is rather the office of a cat than an owl. In barns and granaries, indeed, the services of the owl are acknowledged. This was, however, no metamorphosis of the common people, but a legend story, which both Dr. Johnson and myself read, yet in what book at least I cannot recollect. Our Saviour being refused bread by the daughter of a baker, is described as punishing her by turning her into an owl. STEEVENS.

This is a common story among the vulgar of Gloucestershire, and is thus related: "Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were bakers and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough into the oven to bake for him; but was reprimanded

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her daughter, who insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately afterwards began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon, the baker's daughter cried out, "Heugh, heugh, heugh," which owl-like cry probably induced our Saviour, for her wickedness, to transform her into that bird." This story is often related to children, in order to deter them from such illiberal behaviour to poor people.

DOUCE.

l. 99, l. 29-32. *Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day,*

*All this morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:] Old copies:
To-morrow is, &c.*

the correction is Dr. Farmer's. STEEVENS.

There is a rural tradition, that about this time of year birds choose their mates. Bourne, in his *Antiquities of the Common People*, observes, "it is a ceremony never omitted among the peasantry, to draw lots, which they term *Valentines*, the eve before Valentine-day. The names of an equal number of one sex are by an equal number of the other put into some vessel; and after every one draws a name, which for the present is called their *Valentine*, and is also looked upon as a good omen of their being man and wife hereafterwards." Mr. Brand adds, that he has "searched the legend of St. Valentine, but thinks there is no circumstance in his life, that could give rise to this story." MALONE.

l. 100, first line. — *and don'd his cloathes, }
don, is to do on, to put-on; as doff is to do
put off. STEEVENS.*

P. 100, l. 2. *And dupp'd the chamber*
 To *dup*, is to *do up*; to lift the latch.
 easy to write, — And *op'd* —. JOHNSON.

To *dup*, was a common contraction of to
 The phrase seems to have been adopted
 from *doing up the latch*, or drawing up the
cullis. STEVENS.

P. 100, l. 8. By *Gis*, and by *Saint Ch*
 I rather imagine it should be read,

By Cis, —

That is, by St. Cecily. JOHNSON.

Saint Charity is a known saint among
 man Catholicks. Spenser mentions her,
 V. 255:

“Ah dear Lord, and sweet *Sain*
chity!”

I find, by *Gisse*, used as an adjuration
 by Gascoigne in his *Poems*, by Preston
Cambyzes, and in the comedy of *See me,*
me not, 1618. STEVENS.

In the scene between the Bastard Faulcon
 and the friars and nunne in the First Part
troublesome Raigne of King John, (edi
 p. 256. &c.) the nunne swears by *Gis*, &
 friars pray to *Saint Withold* (another
 saint mentioned in *King Lear*) and adju
 by *Saint Charitie* to hear them. BLACK

There is not the least mention of any saint
 name corresponds with *Gis*, either in the
Calendar, the service in *Usum Sacrum*, or
 Benedictionary of Bishop Athelwold. I
 the word to be only a corrupted abbreviation
Jesus, the letters J. H. S. being anciently
 was set down to denote that sacred name,
 tars, the covers of books, &c. RIBLEY.

Though *Gis* may be, and I believe is

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contraction of *Jeaus*, there is certainly a Saint
Gislen, with whose name it corresponds.

RITSON.

P. 100, l. 11. By cock,] This is likewise a corruption of the sacred name. STEEVENS.

P. 100, l. 12. Come, my coach!] In Marlow's *Tamburlaine*, 1590, Zabina in her frenzy uses the same expression, "Hell, make ready my coach, my chair, my jewels, I come, I come." MALONE.

P. 100, l. 29. 30. When sorrows come, they come not single spies, But in battalions!] In Ray's *Proverbs* we find, "Misfortunes seldom come alone," as a proverbial phrase. REED.

P. 101, l. 1. 2. — we have done but greenly,] But unskilfully; with greenness; that is, without maturity of judgement. JOHNSON.

P. 101, l. 3. In hugger-mugger to inter him:] All the modern editions that I have consulted, give it,

In private to inter him; —

That the words now replaced are better. I do not undertake to prove; it is sufficient that they are Shakspeare's: if phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncount by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost; we shall no longer have the words of any author; and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning. JOHNSON.

P. 101, l. 8. Feeds on his wonder,] The folio reads,

Keeps on his wonder, —

the quarto,

Feeds on this wonder, —

That the same standing is put
them. Sir T. Hanmer reads
Feeds on his anger
P. 101, l. 11-13. Where

*Will nothing stick on
In ear and ear.]* Sir
Whence animosity,
He seems not to have understood
Wherein, that is, *in what*
necessity, or, *the obligation*
support his charge, will

P. 101, l. 13-15. — —

*Like to a murdering-
Gives me superfluous*
as assassins use, with many
to apprehend this, to see the
lititude. WARBURTON.

It appears from a passage
in *mar*, 1627, that it was a
in ships of war: "A case-shoot
bullets, nails, old iron,
the case, to shoot out of the
ers; these will do much

A *murdering-piece* was
Shakespeare's time, for a
small cannon. The word
in *Dictionary*, 1679, and
murale."

The small cannon, which
the fore-castle, half-deck
war, were within this cannon
pieces. MALONE.

Perhaps what is now,

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called a *swivel*. It is mentioned in Sir J. Voiage to the E. Indies, at the end of Valle's Travels, 1665: "—the East India pany had a very little pinuace...mann'd al with ten men', and had only one smoll *m ing-piece* within her." Probably it was charged with a single ball, but always with pieces of old iron;" &c. RITSON.

P. 101, l. 19. Where are my *Switzers* have observed in many of our old plays, the guards, attendant on Kings, are called *Sw* and that without any regard to the country the scene lies. REED.

The reason is, because the Swiss in the time of our poet, as at present, were hired to fight battles of other nations. MALONE.

P. 101, l. 22. The ocean overpeering
list,] The list
the barriers which the spectators of a tournament must not pass. JOHNSON.

List, in this place, only signifies *boundary* the shore.

The *selvage* of cloth was in both places, believe, in our author's thoughts. MALONE.

P. 101, l. 25-29. — *The rabble call him.
And as the world were now but to be
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word
They cry, Choose we; Laertes shall be
King!]* By *we*

here meant a *declaration*, or proposal. It terminated to this sense, by the inference it bore to what had just preceded:

"The rabble call him Lord," &c.

This acclamation, which is the word heard of, was made without regard to antiquity

ceived custom, whose occurrence, however, is necessarily required to confer validity and stability in every proposal of this kind. HEATH.

Sir T. Hamner would transpose this line and the next. Dr. Warburton proposes to read; *ward*; and Dr. Johnson, *weal*, instead of *word*. I should be rather for reading *work*. TYRWHITT.

In the first folio there is only a comma at the end of the above line; and will not the passage bear this construction? — The rabble call him Lord, and as if the world were now but to begin, and as if the ancient custom of hereditary succession were unknown, they, the ratifiers and props of every word he utters, cry, — Let us make choice, that Laertes shall be King. TOLLET.

This construction might certainly be admitted, and the ratifiers and props of every word might be understood to be applied to the rabble mentioned in a preceding line, without Sir T. Hamner's transposition of this and the following line; but there is no authority for what Mr. Tollet adds, "of every word he [Laertes] utters," for the poet has not described Laertes as having uttered a word. If therefore the rabble are called the ratifiers and props of every word, we must understand, "of every word uttered by themselves:" which is so tame, that it would be unjust to our poet to suppose that to have been his meaning. Ratifiers, &c. refer not to the people, but to custom and antiquity, which the speaker says are the true ratifiers and props of every word. The last word, however, of the line may well be suspected to be corrupt; and Mr. Tyrwhitt has probably suggested the true reading. MALONE.

P. 104, last but one l. O, this is counter, ye false Danish dog!

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lounds run *counter* when they trace the trail backwards. JOHNSON.

P. 102, l. 15. — *between the chaste unsmirched brow,*] i. e. clean, not defiled. To *besmirch*, our author uses, Act I. l. v. and again in *K. Henry V.* Act. V. sc. iii.

This seems to be an allusion to a proverb often introduced in the old comedies. Thus, in *The London Prodigal*, 1605: "—as true as the skin between any man's brows." STEEVENS.

P. 104, l. 3-5. *Nature is fine in love: and, where 'tis fine,*

It sends some precious instance of itself

After the thing it loves.] These lines are not in the quarto, and might have been omitted in the folio without great loss, for they are obscure and affected; but, I think, they require no commendation. *Love* (says Laertes) is the passion in which *nature is most exalted and refined*; and as substances, *refined* and subtilised, easily obey any impulse, or follow any attraction, some part of nature, so purified and *refined*, flows off after the attracting object, after the thing loves:

"As into air the purer spirits flow,

"And separate from their kindred dregs below,

"So flew her soul." JOHNSON.

The meaning of the passage may be — That her spirit, like the spirit of fine essences, flew off or evaporated. *Fine*, however, sometimes signifies *useful*. STEEVENS.

P. 104, l. 7. *Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny:*] These words, which were the burthen of a song, are found only in the folio. MALONE.

P. 104, l. 14-16. *O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.*] The story alluded to I do not know; but perhaps the lady stolen by the steward was reduced to *spin*. JOHNSON.

The *wheel* may mean no more than *the burthen of the song*, which she had just repeated, and as such was formerly used. I met with the following observation in an old quarto black-letter book, published before the time of Shakspeare:

"The song was accounted a good one, though it was not moche graced by the *wheels*, which in no wise accorded with the subject matter thereof."

I quote this from memory, and from a book, of which I cannot recollect the exact title or date; but the passage was in a preface to some songs or sonnets. I well remember, to have met with the word in the same sense in other old books.

Rota, indeed, as I am informed, is the ancient musical term in Latin, for the burden of a song. Dr. Farmer, however, has just favoured me with a quotation from Nicholas Breton's *Toyes of an idle Head*, 1577; which at once explains the word *wheel* in the sense for which I have contended:

"That I may sing, full merrily,

"Not heigh ho *wele*, but care away!"

i. e. not with a melancholy, but a cheerful burthen.

I formerly supposed that the ballad, alluded to by Ophelia, was that entered on the books of the Stationers' Company; "October 1580. Four ballades of the Lord of Lotn and the *False Steward*, &c. but Mr. Ritson assures me there is no corresponding *theft* in it. STEVENS.

I am inclined to think that *wheel* is here used in its ordinary sense, and that these words allude

to the occupation of the girl who is supposed to sing the song alluded to by Ophelia.

A musical antiquary may perhaps contend, that the controverted words of the text allude to an ancient instrument mentioned by Chaucer, and called by him a *rote*, by others a *vielle*; which was played upon by the friction of a *wheel*.

MALONE.

P. 104, l. 18.-20. *There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.*] There is probably some mythology in the choice of these herbs, but I cannot explain it. *Pansies* is for *thoughts*, because of its name, *Pensees*; but why *rosemary* indicates *remembrance*, except that it is an ever-green, and carried at funerals, I have not discovered. JOHNSON.

Rosemary was anciently supposed to strengthen the memory, and was not only carried at funerals, but worn at weddings. STEEVENS.

Rosemary being supposed to strengthen the memory, was the emblem of fidelity in lovers.

MALONE.

P. 104, l. 23. *There's fennel for you, and columbines:*] Greene, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, 1620, calls *fennel*, *women's weeds*: "fit generally for that sex, sith while they are maidens, they wish wantonly."

I know not of what *columbines* were supposed to be emblematical. They are again mentioned in *All Fools*, by Chapman, 1605:

"What's that? — a *columbine*?"

"No: that *thankless* flower grows not in my garden."

Gerard, however, and other herbalists, impute few, if any, virtues to them; and they may there-

fore be styled *thankless*, because they appear to make no grateful return for their creation.

From the *Caltha Poetarum*, 1599, it should seem as if this flower was the emblem of cuckoldom:

“ — the blue cornuted columbine,
“ Like to the crooked horns of Acheloy.”

STEEVENS.

Columbine was an emblem of cuckoldom, on account of the horns of its nectaria, which are remarkable in this plant. See *Aquilegia*, in Linnaeus's *Genera*, 684. S. W.

The columbine was emblematical of forsaken lovers:

“ The columbine in tawny often taken,
“ Is then ascribed to such as are forsaken.”

Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*,
Book I. Song ii. 1613.

HOLT WHITE.

Ophelia gives her fennel and columbines to the King. In the collection of Sonnets quoted above, the former is thus mentioned:

“ Fennel is for flatterers,
“ An evil thing 'is sure;
“ But I have alwaies meant truly,
“ With constant heart most pure.”

MALONE.

P. 104, l. 24. 25. *there's rue for you; and here's some for me: — we may call it, herb of grace o'sundays.*] I believe there is a quibble meant in this passage; *rue* anciently signifying the same as *Ruth*, i. e. sorrow. Ophelia gives the Queen some, and keeps a proportion of it for herself.

Herb of grace is one of the titles which Tuck

gives to *William Rufus*, in Decker's *Satiromastix*. I suppose the first syllable of the surname *Rufus* introduced the quibble. STEVENS.

The following passage from Greene's *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, will furnish the best reason for calling *rue* herb of grace o'sundays: "— some of them smil'd and said, *Rue* was called *Herbe-grace*, which though they scorned in their youth, they might wear in their age, and that it was never too late to say *miserere*." HENLEY.

Herb of grace was not the *sunday name*, but the *every day name* of *rue*. In the common dictionaries of Shakspeare's time it is called *herb of grace*. There is no ground therefore for supposing, with Dr. Warburton, that *rue* was called herb of grace, from its being used in exorcisms performed in churches on Sundays.

Ophelia only means, I think, that the Queen may with peculiar propriety on *Sundays*, when she solicits pardon for that crime which she has so much occasion to *rue* and repent of, call her *rue*, *herb of grace*.

Ophelia, after having given the Queen *rue* to remind her of the *sorrow* and *contrition* she ought to feel for her incestuous marriage, tells her, she may wear it with a *difference*, to distinguish it from that worn by Ophelia herself; because her tears flowed from the loss of a father, those of the Queen ought to flow for her guilt." MALONE.

P. 104, l. 26. — *you may wear your rue with a difference.* —] This seems to refer to the rules of heraldry, where the younger brothers of a family bear the same arms *with a difference*, or mark of distinction.

There may, however, be somewhat more implied here than is expressed. You, Madam, (says

316 NOTES TO HAMLET;

Ophelia to the Queen,) *may call your RUE by its Sunday name, HERB OF GRACE, and so wear it with a difference to distinguish it from mine, which can never be any thing but merely RUE, i. e. sorrow.* STEEVENS.

P. 104, l. 27. *There's a daisy.*] Greene, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, has explained the significance of this flower: "—Next them grew the DISSEMBLING DAISIE, to warne such light of-love wenchcs not to trust every faire promise that such amorous bachelors make them."

HENLEY.

P. 104, l. 27. 28. *I would give you some violets; but they wither'd all, when my father died:*] The violet is thus characterized in the old collection of Sonnets above quoted, printed in 1584:

"*Violet is for faithfulness,*

"*Which in me shall abide;*

"*Hoping likewise that from your heart*

"*You will not let it slide."* MALONE.

P. 104, l. 30. *For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—*] This is part of an old song, mentioned likewise by Beaumont and Fletcher, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Act IV. sc. i:

"—I can sing the broom,

"*And Bonny Robin.*" STEEVENS.

P. 104, l. 32. *Thought and affliction,*] *Thought* here, as in many other places, signifies melancholy.

MALONE.

P. 105, l. 11. — *of all christian souls!*] This is the common conclusion to many of the ancient monumental inscriptions. See Weever's *Funeral Monuments*, p. 657, 658. Berthelette, the publisher of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, 1554, speaking

first of the funeral of Chaucer, and then of Gower, says: "—— he lieth buried in the monasterie of Seynt Peter's at Westminster, &c. *On whose soules and all christen, Jesu have mercie.*" STEEVENS.

P. 105, l. 14. — *I must commune with your grief,*] The folio reads—*common*. To *common* is to *commune*. This word, pronounced as anciently spelt, is still in frequent provincial use. STEEVENS.

P. 105, l. 27. *No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,*] It was the custom, in the times of our author, to hang a sword over the grave of a knight.

JOHNSON.

This practice is uniformly kept up to this day. Not only the sword, but the helmet, gauntlet, spurs, and tabard (i. e. a coat whereon the armorial ensigns were anciently depicted, whence the term *coat of armour*) are hung over the grave of every knight. SIR J. HAWKINS.

P. 106, last l. — *yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter.*] The *bore* is the caliber of a gun, or the capacity of the barrel. *The matter* (says Hamlet) *would carry heavier words.* JOHNSON.

P. 108, l. 2. — *the general gender* —] The *common race* of the people. JOHNSON.

P. 108, l. 4. — *like the spring that turneth wood to stone,*] This simile is neither very seasonable in the deep interest of this conversation, nor very accurately applied. If the *spring* had changed base metals to gold, the thought had been more proper.

JOHNSON.

The allusion here is to the qualities still ascribed to the dropping well at Knaresborough in Yorkshire.

Camden (edit. 1590, p. 564,) thus mentions it: "Sub quo fons est in quem ex impendentibus rupibus aquae guttatim distillant, unde DROPPING WELL vocant, in quem *quicquid ligni immittitur, lapideo cortice brevi obduci et lapidescere observatum est.*" REED.

P. 108, l. 5-8. — *so that my arrows,
Two slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads — for so *loured arm'd*. If these words have any meaning, it should seem to be — The instruments of offence I employ, would have proved too weak to injure one who is so *loved and arm'd* by the affection of the people. Their love, like *armour*, would revert the arrow to the bow. STEEVENS.

Loured arm'd is as extraordinary a corruption as any that is found in these plays. MALONE.

P. 108, l. 11. — *if praises may go back again,*] If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more. JOHNSON.

P. 108, l. 17. *That we can let our beard be
shook with danger,*] It is wonderful that none of the advocates for the learning of Shakspeare have told us that this line is imitated from Persius, Sat. ii:

"Idcirco stolidam praebet tibi vellere
barbam

"Jupiter?" STEEVENS.

P. 109, l. 23. As *checking at his voyage,*] The phrase is from falconry; and may be justified from the following passage in Kinde's *Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606: "—— For who knows not, quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now "

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fair to the fist, may to-morrow *check* at the lure ?”

STEEVENS.

P. 110, l. 3. *Of the unworthiest siege.*] Of the lowest rank. *Siege*, for *seat*, *place*.

JOHNSON.

P. 110, l. 9. *Importing health and graveness.*] *Importing* here may be, not *inferring* by logical consequence, but *producing* by physical effect. A young man regards show in his dress, an old man, *health*. JOHNSON.

Importing health, I apprehend, means, *denoting an attention to health*. MALONE.

Importing may only signify—*implying*, *denoting*.

Mr. Malone’s explanation, however, may be the true one. STEEVENS.

P. 110, l. 18. 19. — *I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,*

Come short of what he did.] I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform. JOHNSON.

P. 110, l. 29. *For art and exercise in your defence,*] That is, in the *science* of defence. JOHNSON.

P. 110, l. 32. & fol. — the *scrimers*] The *fencers*. JOHNSON.

From *escrimeur*, Fr. a fencer. MALONE.

This unfavourable description of the French swordsmen is not in the folio. STEEVENS.

P. 111, l. 11. — *love is begun by time;*] This is obscure. The meaning may be, *love* is not innate in us, and co-essential to our nature, but begins at a certain time from some external cause, and being always subject to the operations of time, suffers change and diminution. JOHNSON.

The King reasons thus: — “I do not suspect

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that you did not love your father; but I know that time abates the force of affection." I therefore suspect that we ought to read:

— *love is begone by time*;
I suppose that Shakspeare places the syllable *be* before *gone*, as we say *be-paint*, *be-spatter*, *be-think*, &c. M. MASON.

P. 111, l. 12. — in passages of proof,] In transactions of daily experience. JOHNSON.

P. 111, l. 17. — growing to a *plurisy*,] I would believe, for the honour of Shakspeare, that he wrote *plethory*. But I observe the dramatick writers of that time frequently call a fullness of blood a *plurisy*, as if it came, not from *πλεγμα*, but from *plus*, *pluris*. WARBURTON.

I think the word should be spelt — *plurisy*. This passage is fully explained by one in Mascall's treatise on cattle, 1662, p. 187: "Against the blood, or *plurisie* of blood. The disease of blood is, some young horses will feed, and being fat will increase blood, and so grow to a *plurisie*, and die thereof if he have not soon help."

TOLLET.
We should certainly read *plurisy*, as Tollet observes. M. MASON.

Dr. Warburton is right. The word is spelt *plurisy* in the quarto, 1604, and is used in the same sense as here, in 'Tis Pity she's a Whore by Ford, 1633. MALONE.

Mr. Pope introduced this simile in the Essay on Criticism, v. 303:

"For works may have more wit than
does them good,
"As bodies perish through excess
blood."

Ascham has a thought very similar to P.

'twenty to one, offend more, in writing to ch, then to tittle: *euen as twenty, fall into tnesse, rather by ouer much fulnes then by lacke or emptinesse.*" *The Schole-Master*, bl. 1. fol. 43. HOLT WHITE.

' 111, l. 23. And then this *should* is like a *spendthrift sigh*,

That hurts by easing.] A *spendthrift sigh* is a *sigh* that makes an unnecessary waste of the vital force. It is a notion very prevalent, that *sighs* impair the strength, and wear out the animal powers.

JOHNSON.

io, in the *Governall of Helthe*, &c. printed Wyukyn de Worde: "And for why whan a man casteth out that noble humour too moche, his face is hugely dyscolored, and his body moche febled, & then he lete four *sythes*, soo moche blode of his body." STEEVENS.

ence they are called, in *King Henry VI.*—*blood-consuming sighs*. Again, in *Pericles*, 1609:

"Do not consume your blood with sorrowing."

leia is enlarged upon in Fenton's *Tragical verses*, 1579: "Why staye you not in tyme, for the force of your scorching *sighes*, that have drayned your body of his wholesome humours, appoynted by nature to gyve sucke to the inward parts of you?"

original quarto, as well as the folio, reads—*breath's sigh*; but I have no doubt that it is a corruption, arising from the first letter of the following word *sigh*, being an *s*. I have therefore like the other modern editors, printed—

first sigh, following a late quarto, (which is of no authority,) printed in 1611. That it consumes the blood, hurts us by

easing, or is prejudicial to us on the whole, though it affords a temporary relief, is sufficiently clear but the former part of the line, *and then it should*, may require a little explanation. I suppose the King means to say, that if we do not promptly execute what we are convinced we *should* or ought to do, we shall afterwards in vain repent our not having seized the fortunate moment for action: and this opportunity which we have let go by us, and the reflection that we *should* have done that, which, from supervening accidents, it is no longer in our power to do, is as prejudicial and painful to us as a blood-consuming sigh, that once hurts and eases us.

I apprehend the poet meant to compare such conduct, and the consequent reflection, *only* to a pernicious quality which he supposed to be annexed to sighing, and not to the temporary ease which it affords. His similes, as I have frequently had occasion to observe, seldom run on four feet. MAL.

P. 112, l. 3. — being *remiss*,] He being vigilant or cautious. JOHNSON.

P. 112, l. 7. A sword *unbated*,] i. e. not blunted as foils are. Or, as one edition has it, *embated* or *envenomed*. POPE.

There is no such reading as *embated* in any edition. In Sir Thomas North's translation of Machiavelli, it is said of one of the *Medelli*, that he shewed the people the cruel fight of few *unrebated* swords." STEEVENS.

Not blunted, as foils are by a button at the end. MALONE.

P. 112, l. 7. — in a *pass of practice*,] *Practice* is often by Shakspeare, and other writers, taken for an *insidious stratagem*, or *trick*, a sense not incongruous to this passage.

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et I rather believe, that nothing more is meant than a *thrust for exercise*. JOHNSON.

A *pass of practice* is a *favourite pass*, one that Laertes was well practised in. The treachery on this occasion, was his using a sword *unbated and envenomed*. M. MASON.

P. 112, l. 16-18. — *I'll touch my point
With this contagion; that, if I gall him
slightly,*

It may be death.] It is a matter of surprise, that no one of Shakspeare's numerous and able commentators has remarked, with proper armth and detestation, the villainous assassin-like treachery of Laertes in this horrid plot. There the more occasion that he should be here pointed out an object of abhorrence, as he is a character we are, in some preceding parts of the play, led to respect and admire. RITSON.

P. 112, l. 21. *May fit us to our shape:*] *May enable us to assume proper characters*, and to do our part. JOHNSON.

P. 112, l. 26. *If this should blast in proof,*] his, I believe, is a metaphor taken from a mine, which, in the proof or execution, sometimes breaks out with an ineffectual *blast*. JOHNSON.

The word *proof* shows the metaphor to be taken from the trying or proving fire-arms or cannon, which often *blast* or *burst* in the *proof*.

STREEVENS.

P. 112, l. 32. — *I'll have preferr'd him*] i. e. presented to him. Thus the quarto, 1604. The word indeed is mis-spelt, *prefard*. The folio adds — *I'll have prepar'd him*. MALONE.

To prefer (as Mr. Malone observes) certainly *means* — to *present*, or *offer*. STREEVENS.

P. 112, last but one l. — *your venom'd stick,*]

NOTES TO HAMLET,

stuck, read *tuck*, a common name for a
BLACKSTONE.

venom'd stuck is, your venom'd thrust.
was a term of the fencing-school. MALONE.
113, l. 10. By long purples is meant a plant,
modern botanical name of which is *orchis*
mas, anciently *testiculus morionis*. The
name by which it passes, is sufficiently
known in many parts of England, and particu-
larly in the county where Shakspeare lived. Thus
Mr. Warner. Mr. Collins adds, that in Sussex
is still called *dead men's hands*; and that in
Cory's Herbal, 1578, its various names, too gross
for repetition, are preserved.

Dead men's thumbs are mentioned in an an-
cient bl. l. ballad, entitled *The deceased Maiden*
Lover. STEEVENS.

One of the grosser names of this plant Gertrude
had a particular reason to avoid: — *the rampant*
widow. MALONE.

P. 113, l. 12. — *liberal* —] *Licentious*. REED.
Liberal is free-spoken, licentious in language.
So, in *Othello*: "Is he not a most profane and
liberal counsellor?" MALONE.

P. 113, l. 20. *Which time, she chanted*
snatches of old tunes;
snatches of old tunes;

Fletcher, in his *Scornful Lady*, very invidiously
ridicules this incident:
"I will run mad first, and if that get not pity,
"I'll drown myself to a most dismal ditty."
WARBURTON.

P. 113, l. 22, 23. — *like a creature native*
and indur'd
Unto that element:] I do not think the
word *indur'd* is sense in this place; and believe
— *read inured*.

ber
lors
ed,
water.
Our
discrim
P. 113

To
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p

formed by nature; clothed, endowed, or furnished, with properties suited to the element of water.

Our old writers used *indued* and *endowed* indiscriminately. MALONE.

P. 113, l. 25. 26. *Pull'd the poor wretch from
her melodious lay*

To muddy death.] In the first scene of the next act we find Ophelia buried with such rites as betoken she *foredid her own life*. It should be remembered, that the account here given, is that of a friend; and that the Queen could not possibly know what passed in the mind of Ophelia, when she placed herself in so perilous a situation. After the facts had been weighed and considered, the priest in the next act pronounces, that *her death was doubtful*. MALONE.

P. 114, l. 11. 12.—*make her grave straight:]*
Make her grave from east to west in a direct line

NOTES TO HAMLET, -

ridicule on scholastick divisions without difference.
n; and of distinctions without difference. WARREN

P. 114, last l. — crowner's-quest law, strongly suspect that this is a ridicule on the of Dame Hales, reported by Plowden in his commentaries, as determined in 3 Eliz.

It seems, her husband sir James Hales has ed himself in a river; and the question whether by this act a forfeiture of the death and chapter of Canterbury, was possessed of, did not accrue to the coroner's inquisition was found before the coroner him *felo de se*. The legal and logical arising in the course of the argument gave a very fair opportunity for a *quest-law*. The expression, that an act hath three branches, an allusion to the case I mention doubt but that Shakspeare was and meant to laugh at it.

It may be added, that on the deal of subtilty was used, to James was the agent or the person words, whether he went to water came to him. The madness was the circumstance the judge who condemned

If Shakspeare meant Dame Hales, (which indeed must have heard of determined

go. Our author's study was probably not much encumbered with old French Reports. MALONE.

P. 115, l. 7. — more than their *even christian*.] o, all the old books, and rightly. An old English expression for fellow-christian. THIRLBY.

P. 115, l. 17. — *confess thyself* —] *And be ang'd*, the Clown, I suppose, would have said, he had not been interrupted. This was a common proverbial sentence. See *Othello*, Act IV. i. — He might, however, have intended to say, *confess thyself an ass*. MALONE.

P. 115, l. 29. 30. *Who builds stronger than mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?*] The quisitive reader may meet with an assemblage of such queries (which perhaps composed the chief stivity of our aucestors by an evening fire) in a volume of very scarce tracts, preserved in the University Library at Cambridge, D. 5. 2. The innocence of these *Demaundes Joyous* may deserve praise which is not always due to their delicacy.

STEEVENS.

P. 115, l. 31. and *unyoke*.] If it be not sufficient to say, with Dr. Warburton, that this phrase might be taken from husbandry, without much path of reading, we may produce it from a distich the workmen of Dover, preserved in the addition to Holieshed, p. 1546:

"My bow is broke, I would *unyoke*,
"My foot is sore; I can worke no more."

FARMER.

P. 116, l. 9. & fol. The three stanzas, sung by the grave-digger, have been extracted; with a slight variation, from a little poem, called *The Good Lover's Remembrance to his Love*, written by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey; who flourished in the reign of King Henry VIII. and who was beheaded

1547, on a strained accusation or

P. 116, l. 11. 12. *To contract,*
for, ah,

O, methought, there was no
 This passage, as it stands, is absurd
 but if we read "for aye," instead
 it will have some kind of sense, as
 "that it was not meet, though he w
 contract himself *for ever*." M. M.

Dr. Percy is of opinion that the
 ruptions in these stanzas, might be
 signed by the poet himself, the bet
 character of an illiterate clown."

Behove is interest, convenience.

— *nothing meet*.] Thus the fo
 to, 1604, reads:

O me thought there a was no

The original poem from which
 taken, like the other succeeding one
 among lord Surrey's poems; though
 has observed, it is attributed to
 George Gascoigne.

All these difficulties however (say
 mas Warton, *History of English L*
 p. 45,) are at once adjusted by l
 25, in the British Museum, in w
 copy of Vaux's poem, beginning,
did love, with the title "A dyttie
 by the lord Vaux, in the time of th
 Marye, representing the image of d

The entire song is published by
 the first volume of *Reliques of A*
Poetry. STEEVENS.

P. 116, l. 27. 28. This mig

politician, which this *ass* now *o'er-reaches*;] The folio reads — *o'er-offices*. STEEVENS.

In the quarto, [1604] for *over-offices* is *over-reaches*, which agrees better with the sentence: it is a strong exaggeration to remark, that an *ass* can *over-reach* him who would once have tried to *circumvent* —. I believe both these words were Shakspeare's. An author in revising his work, when his original ideas have faded from his mind, and new observations have produced new sentiments, easily introduces images which have been more newly impressed upon him, without observing their want of congruity to the general texture of his original design. JOHNSON.

P. 117, l. 4. — *e'en so: and now my lady Worm's*;] The scull that was *my lord Such-a-one's*, is now *my lady Worm's*. JOHNSON.

P. 117, l. 8. — to play at *loggats*] This is a game played in several parts of England even at this time. A stake is fixed into the ground; those who play, throw *loggats* at it, and he that is nearest the stake, wins; I have seen it played in different counties at their sheep-sheering feasts, where the winner was entitled to a black fleece, which he afterwards presented to the farmer's maid to spin for the purpose of making a petticoat, and on condition that she knelt down on the fleece to be kissed by all the rusticks present.

It is one of the unlawful games enumerated in the statute of 33 of Henry VIII. STEEVENS.

Loggeting in the fields is mentioned for the first time among other "*new and crafty games and plays*," in the statute of 33 Henry VIII. c. 9. Not being mentioned in former acts against unlawful games, it was probably not practised long

before the statute of Henry the Eighth was made.

MALONE

A *loggat-ground*, like a skittle-ground, is strewn with ashes, but is more extensive. A bowl is larger than the jack of the game of bowls is the first. The pins, which I believe are called *loggs*, are much thinner, and lighter at one extremity than the other. The bowl being first thrown, players take the pins up by the thinner and lighter end, and sling them towards the bowl, and such a manner that the pins may once turn round in the air, and slide with the thinner extremity foremost towards the bowl. The pins are about one or two-and-twenty inches long. BLOUNT.

P. 117, l. 17. *Quillets* are nice and frivolous distinctions. The word is rendered by Coles in his Latin Dictionary, 1679, *res frivola*. MALONE

P. 117, l. 19. — *the sconce*] i. e. the helmet.

STEELE

P. 117, l. 21-23. *This fellow might be in time a great buyer of land, with his status, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries:*] By a *statute* is here meant, an act of parliament, but a species of security-money, affecting real property; whereby the lands of the debtor are conveyed to the creditor, till the rents and profits of them his debt may be satisfied. MALONE.

A recovery with *double voucher* is the most usually suffered, and is so denominated from two persons (the latter of whom is always the common cryer, or some such inferior person) being successively *vouched*, or called upon, to warrant the tenant's title. Both *fines* and *recoveries* are fictions of law, used to convert an estate tail into fee simple. Statutes are (not acts of parliament)

but) *statutes-merchant* and *staple*, particular modes of *recognizance* or acknowledgement for securing *debts*, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land. *Statutes* and *recognizances* are constantly mentioned together in the covenants of a purchase deed. RITSON.

P. 118, first l. *They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that.*] A quibble is intended. Deeds, which are usually written on parchment, are called the common *assurances* of the kingdom. MALONE.

P. 118, l. 23. 24. — *we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us.*] The card is the paper on which the different points of the compass were described. *To do any thing by the card*, is, *to do it with nice observation.*

JOHNSON,

The card is a *sea-chart*, still so termed by mariners: and the word is afterwards used by Osrick in the same sense. Hamlet's meaning will therefore be, *we must speak directly forward in a straight line*, plainly to the point. RITSON.

We must speak with the same precision and accuracy as is observed in making the true distances of coasts, the heights, courses, &c. in a *sea-chart*, which in our poet's time was called a *card*. In 1589 was published in 4to. *A briefe Discourse of Mappes and Cardes, and of their Uses.*— The "shipman's card" in *Macbeth*, is the paper on which the different points of the compass are described. MALONE.

In every ancient *sea-chart* that I have seen, the compass, &c. was likewise introduced.

STEEVENSON.

P. 118, l. 26. 27. — *the age is grown so pick-
ed, that the toe of the peasant comes so near*

the heel of the courtier,] So smart, so sharp, says Sir T. Haumer, very properly; but there was, I think, about that time, a *picked* shoe, that is, a shoe with a long pointed toe, in fashion, to which the allusion seems likewise to be made. *Every man now is smart; and every man now is a man of fashion.* JOHNSON.

This fashion of wearing shoes with long pointed toes was carried to such excess in England, that it was restrained at last by proclamation so long ago as the fifth year of Edward IV. when it was ordered, "that the beaks or pykes of shoes and boots should not pass two inches, upon pain of cursing by the clergy, and forfeiting twenty shillings, to be paid, one noble to the King, another to the cordwainers of London, and the third to the chamber of London; — and for other countries and towns the like order was taken. — Before this time, and since the year 1482, the pykes of shoes and boots were of such length, that they were fain to be tied up to the knee with chains of silver, and gilt, or at least silken laces." STEEVENS.

i. e. so spruce, so quaint, so affected.

There is, I think, no allusion to *picked* or pointed shoes, as has been supposed. *Picked* was a common word of Shakspeare's age, in the sense above given, and is found in Minshew's Dictionary, 1617, with its original signification: "*Trim'd or drest sprucely.*" It is here used metaphorically.

MALONE.

I should have concurred with Mr. Malone in giving a general sense to the epithet — *picked*, but for Hamlet's mention of the *toe* of the peasant, &c.

STEEVENS.

P. 118, last l. It was that very day that young Hamlet was born:] By this scene is ev-

ars that Hamlet was then thirty years old, and
ew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty-two
ars. And yet in the beginning of the play he is
oken of as a *very young* man; one that designed
go back to school, i. e. to the university of
ittenberg. The poet in the fifth act had forgot
at he wrote in the first. BLACKSTONE.

P. 120, l. 15. — my lady's *chamber*,] Thus
s folio. The quartos read—my lady's *table*;
eaning, I suppose, her *dressing-table*.

STEEVENS.
P. 120, l. 16. — to this *favour*] i. e. to this
utenance or complexion. MALONE.

P. 121, l. 3. Imperious *Caesar*,] Thus the
arto, 1604. The editor of the folio substituted
perial, not knowing that *imperious* was used
the same sense. There are other instances in
s folio of a familiar term being substituted in
room of a more ancient word. MALONE.

P. 121, l. 6. — winter's *flaw*!] Winter's *blast*.
JOHNSON.

A *flaw* meant a sudden gust of wind. So, in
orio's Italian Dictionary, 1598;—"Gropppo, a
w, or berrie of wind." MALONE.

P. 121, l. 12. — *maimed rites*!] Imperfect
sequies. JOHNSON.

P. 121, l. 14. To *fordo* is to undo, to destroy
STEEVENS.

P. 121, l. 14. — 'Twas of some *estate*.] Some
rson of high rank. JOHNSON.

P. 121, l. 21. 1. *Priest*.] This *Priest* in the
d quarto is called *Doctor*. STEEVENS.

P. 121, l. 21-23. *Her obsequies have been*
as far enlarg'd

As we have warranty:] Is there any allu-
sion here to the coroner's warrant, directed to the

334 **NOTES TO HAMLET,**

minister and church-wardens of a parish, and permitting the body of a person, who comes to an untimely end, to receive christian burial?

WHALLEY.

P. 121, l. 27. *Shards,*] i. e. broken pots or tiles, called *pot-sherds*, *tile-sherds*. So, in *Job*, ii. 8: "And he took him a *potsherd*, (i. e. a piece of a broken pot,) to scarpe himself withal."

RITSON.

P. 121, l. 29. Yet here she is allow'd her virgin *orants*,] Evidently corrupted from *shants*, which is the true word. A *specific* rather than a *generic* term being here required to answer to *maiden strewments*.

WARBURTON.

For this untutal word the editor of the first folio substituted *rites*. By a more attentive examination and comparison of the quarto copies and the folio, Dr. Johnson, I have no doubt, would have been convinced that this and many other changes in the folio were not made by Shakspeare, as is suggested in the following note. MALONE.

I have been informed by an anonymous correspondent, that *crants* is the German word for *garlands*, and I suppose it was retained by us from the Saxons. To carry *garlands* before the bier of a maiden, and to hang them over her grave, is still the practice in rural parishes.

Crants therefore was the original word, which the author, discovering it to be provincial, and perhaps not understood, changed to a term more intelligible, but less proper. *Maiden rites* give no certain or definite image. He might have put *maiden wreaths*, or *maiden garlands*, but he perhaps bestowed no thought upon it; and neither

genius nor practice will always supply a hasty writer with the most proper diction. JOHNSON.

In Minshew's Dictionary, see *Beades*, where *roosen krants* means *sertum rosarium*; and such is the name of a character in this play. TOLLET.

P. 121, l. 31. *Burial*, here signifies interment in consecrated ground. WARBURTON.

P. 122, first l. To sing a *requiem*,] A *requiem*; is a mass performed in Popish churches for the rest of the soul of a person deceased. The folio reads—sing *sage* requiem. STEEVENS.

P. 123, l. 20. *Woul't drink up Eisl? eat a crocodile?*] *Eisl* — This word has through all the editions been distinguished by Italick characters, as if it were the proper name of some river; and so, I dare say, all the editors have from time to time understood it to be. But in this must be some river in Denmark; and there is none there so called; nor is there any near a name, that I know of but *Yssel*, from which province of Overijssel derives its title in the man Flanders. Besides, Hamlet is not proving any impossibilities to Laertes, as the drinking up a river would be: but he rather seems to say, — Wilt thou resolve to do things the most disgusting and distasteful to human nature; and, indeed, I am as resolute. I am persuaded the folio wrote:

Wilt drink up Eisel? eat a crocodile?
Wilt thou swallow down large draughts of
it? The proposition, indeed, is not very
pleasant but the doing it might be as distasteful and
unwholesome as eating the flesh of a crocodile. And
it is neither an impossibility, nor an absurdity
and the lowness of the idea is in some

NOTES TO HAMLET, -

TERESA K. D.

measure removed by the uncommon term.

Sir T. Hamner has,

Wilt drink up Nile? or eat a crocodile?

Hamlet certainly meant (for he says he will rant) to dare Laertes to attempt any thing, however difficult or unnatural; and might safely promise to follow the example his antagonist was to set, in draining the channel of a river, or trying his teeth on an animal whose scales are supposed to be impenetrable. Had Shakspeare meant to make Hamlet say — *Wilt thou drink vinegar?* he probably would not have used the term *drink up*; which means, *totally to exhaust*; neither is that challenge very magnificent, which only provokes an adversary to hazard a fit of the heart-burn or the colick.

The commentator's Ysell would serve Hamlet's turn or mine. This river is twice mentioned by Stowe, p. 755: "It standeth a good distance from the river Issell, but hath a scone on Issell of incredible strength."

But in an old Latin account of Denmark and the neighbouring provinces, I find the names of several rivers little differing from *Esil*, or *Eisill*, in spelling or pronunciation. Such are the *Essa*, the *Oesil*; and some others. The word, like many more, may indeed be irrecoverably corrupted; but, I must add, that few authors later than Chaucer or Skelton make use of *eysel* for *vinegar*: nor has Shakspeare employed it in any other of his plays. The poet might have written the *W'eise!* a considerable river which falls into the Baltic ocean, and could not be unknown to any Prince of Denmark. STEEVENS.

The quarto, 1604, has *esil*. In the folio the word is spelt *esile*. *Kisil* or *eisel* is vinegar. The word is used by Chaucer, and by Sir Thomas More.

Mr. Steevens supposes, that a river was meant, either the *Yssel*, or *Oesil*, or *Weisel*, a considerable river which falls into the Baltick ocean. The words, *drink up*, he considers as favourable to his notion. "Had Shakspeare, (he observes,) meant to make Hamlet say, *Wilt thou drink vinegar?* he probably would not have used the term *drink up*, which means, *totally to exhaust*. In *King Richard II.* Act II. sc. ii. (he adds) a thought in part the same occurs:

"—— the task he undertakes,
"Is numb'ring sands, and *drinking oceans dry*."

But I must remark, in that passage evidently *impossibilities* are pointed out. Hamlet is only talking of difficult or painful exertions. Every man can weep, fight, fast, tear himself, drink a potion of vinegar, and eat a piece of a dissected crocodile, however disagreeable; for I have no doubt that the poet uses the words *eat a crocodile*, for *eat of a crocodile*. We yet use the same phraseology in familiar language.

On the phrase *drink up* no stress can be laid, for our poet has employed the same expression in his 114th Sonnet, without any idea of *entirely exhausting*, and merely as synonymous to *drink*.

In Shakspeare's time, as at present, to *drink up*, often meant no more than simply to drink. In like manner we sometimes say, "when you have *swallow'd down* this potion," though we mean no more than — "when you have *swallow'd* this *potion*." MALONE.

Mr. Malone's strictures are undoubtedly acute, and though not, in my own opinion, decisive, may still be just. Yet as I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of a Prince's challenging a nobleman to drink what Mrs. Quickly has called "a mess of vinegar," I have neither changed our former text, nor withdrawn my original remarks on it, notwithstanding they are almost recapitulated in those of my opponent. — On the score of such redundancy, however, I both need and solicit the indulgence of the reader. STEEVENS.

P. 125, l. 51. 52. — *as patient as the female dove,*

When that her golden couplets are disclosed,] To disclose was anciently used for to hatch. So, in *The Booke of Huntynge, Hawkyng, Fyshyng, &c.* bl. l. nu date: "First they ben eges; and after they ben disclosed, haukes; and commonly goshaukes ben disclosed as sone as the choughes." To exclude is the technical term at present. During three days after the pigeon has hatched her couplets, (for she lays no more than two eggs,) she never quits her nest, except for a few moments in quest of a little food for herself; as all her young require in that early state, is to be kept warm, an office which she never entrusts to the male. STEEVENS.

The young nestlings of the pigeon, when first disclosed, are callow, only covered with a yellow down: and for that reason stand in need of being cherished by the warmth of the hen, to protect them from the chillness of the ambient air, for a considerable time after they are hatched.

HEATH.

P. 124, l. 19-21. Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,

this scene :

[After the death of Polonius] “Fengon [the King in the present play] could not content himself, but still his mind gave him that the foole [Hamlet] would play him some trick of legerdemaine. And in that conceit, seeking to bee rid of him; determined to find the meanes to doe it by the aid of a stranger, making the King of England minister of his massacrous resolution; to whom he purposed to send him, and by letters desire him to put him to death.

“Now to beare him company, were assigned two of Fengon’s faithful ministers, bearing letters ingraven in wood, that contained Hamlet’s death, in such sort as he had advertised the King of England. But the subtil Danish prince, (being at sea,) whilst his companions slept, having read the letters, and knowing his uncle’s great treason, with the wicked and villainous mindes of the two courtiers that led him to him to the slaughter, raced out the letters that concerned his death, and instead thereof graved others, with comission to the King

though certainly, own safety, does not appear — — —
ton and unprovoked cruelty, as Mr. Sa
supposed in his very ingenious observation
general character and conduct of the Prince
out this piece.

In the conclusion of his drama the po
tirely deviated from the fabulous histor
in other places he has frequently followe

After Hamblet's arrival in England, (t
fight is mentioned,) "the King, (says *The
of Hamblet*) admiring the young Prince
him his daughter in marriage, accordi
counterfeit letters by him devised; and
day caused the two servants of Fengon
cuted, to satisfy, as he thought, the King
Hist. of Hamb. Ibid.

Hamlet, however, returned to Denmar
— — — the King of England's daught

and hear in the cause before them, and not to be influenced by extraneous particulars unsupported by legal evidence in open court. I persist in observing that from Shakspeare's drama no proofs of the guilt of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern can be collected. They may be convicted by the black letter history; but if the tragedy forbears to eriminate, it has no right to sentence them. This is sufficient for the commentator's purpose. It is not his office to interpret the plays of Shakspeare according to the novels on which they are founded, novels which the poet sometimes followed, but as often materially deserted. Perhaps he never confined himself strictly to the plan of any one of his originals. His negligence of poetick justice is notorious; nor can we expect that he who was content to sacrifice the pious Ophelia, should have been more scrupulous about the worthless lives of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Therefore, I still assert, that, in the tragedy before us, their deaths appear both wanton and unprovoked; and the critick, like Bayes, must have recourse to somewhat *long before the beginning of this play*, to justify the conduct of its hero. STEEVENS.

P. 124, l. 21. 22. — — — I lay

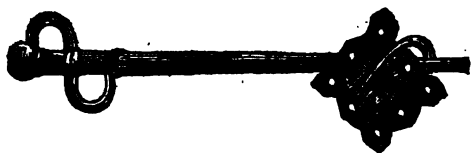
Worse than the *mutines* in the *bilboes*.] *Mutines*, the French word for seditions or disobedient fellows in the army or fleet. *Bilboes*, the ship's prison. JOHNSON.

To *mutine* was formerly used for to *mutiny*.

MALONE.

The *bilboes* is a bar of iron with fetters annexed to it, by which mutinous or disorderly sailors were anciently linked together. The word is derived from *Bilboa*, a place in Spain where instruments of steel were fabricated in the utmost pri-

fection. To understand Shakspeare's allusion completely, it should be known, that as these fetters connect the legs of the offenders very close together, their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Hamlet, in whose mind *there was a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep*. Every motion of one must disturb his partner in confinement. The *bilboes* are still shown in the Tower of London, among the other spoils of the Spanish Armada. The following is the figure of them :



STEEVENS.

P. 124, l. 22 - last l. — — — — *Rashly,
And prais'd be rashness for it, — Let us
know,*

*Our indiscretion sometime serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that
should teach us,*

*There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.*

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,

*My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them: } Hamlet, &*

livering an account of his escape, begins with saying — That he *rashly*—and then is carried into a reflection upon the weakness of human wisdom. I *rashly*—praised be rashness for it—*Let us* not think these events casual, but *let us know*, that is, *take notice and remember*, that we sometimes succeed by *indiscretion*, when we *fail* by *deep plots*, and infer the perpetual superintendence and *agency* of the *Divinity*. The observation is just, and will be allowed by every human being who shall reflect on the course of his own life. JOHNSON.

This passage, I think, should be thus distributed :

— — — — *Rashly*
 (*And prais'd be rashness, for it lets us*
know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us
well,
When our deep plots do fail; and
should teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our
ends,
Rough-hew them how we will; —
Hor. That is most certain.)
Ham. Up from my cabin, &c.

So that *rashly* may be joined in construction with —
in the dark grop'd I to find out them.

TYRWHITT,

Dr. Farmer informs me, that the words — *that shapes our ends, rough-hew them, how we will* — are merely technical. A wool-man, butcher, and dealer in *skewers*, lately observed to him that his nephew, (an idle lad) could only assist him in making them; “ — he could rough-hew them, but I was obliged to shape their ends.” Whatever



should have been a very proper answer
equivocal between reasons and in
Shakespeare's time were undoubted
plike. Sorts of *rasins*, sugars,
mon phraseology of shops. — A
quibble in another play. MALON

I suspect no quibble or conceit
Hamlet. In one of Ophelia's song
has already occurred: "*Larde*
flowers." To *lard* any thing wh
ever, was a practice unknown to

P. 125, l. 8 With, ho! *such* ^{in m}
such causes of terror, rising
and designs. JOHNSON.

A *bug* was no less a terrifick.
We call it at present a *bugbear*.
no *leisur*

ing how luckily every thing fell out; he groped out their commission in the dark without waking them; he found himself doomed to immediate destruction. Something was to be done for his preservation. An expedient occurred, not produced by the comparison of one method with another, or by a regular deduction of consequences, but before he could make a prologue to his brains, they had begun the play, — Before he could summon his faculties, and propose to himself what should be done, a complete scheme of action presented itself to him. His mind operated before he had excited it. This, appears to me to be the meaning. JOHNSON.

Or in old English signified *before*. MALONE.

P. 125, l. 20-22. *Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair:*

I once did hold it, as our statists do,

A baseness to write fair,] A *statist* is a *statesman*. STEEVENS.

Most of the great men of Shakspeare's time, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands; their secretaries very neat ones.

BLACKSTONE.

"I have in my time, (says Montaigne,) seen some, who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprenticeship, marre their pen, and affect the ignorance of so vulgar a qualitie." Florio's translation, 1603, p. 125. RITSON.

P. 125, l. 24. *It did me yeoman's service.]*

The meaning, I believe, is, *This yeomanly qualification was a most useful servant, or yeoman, to me; i. e. did me eminent service.* The ancient yeomen were famous for their military valour. "These were the good squires in times past

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(says Sir Thomas Smith,) and the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France." STREVENA.

P. 125, l. 29. *As love between them like the palm might flourish;*

This comparison is scriptural. "The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree." "Psalm xcii. 11.

STREVENA.

P. 125, l. 31. *And stand a comma 'twixt their amities;*

The expression of our author is, like many of his phrases, sufficiently constrained and affected, but it is not incapable of explanation. The *comma* is the note of connection and continuity of sentences; the *period* is the note of *abruption* and disjunction. Shakspeare had it perhaps in his mind to write,—*That unless England complied with the mandate, war should put a period to their amity*; he altered his mode of diction, and thought that, in an opposite sense, he might put, *that peace should stand a comma between their amities*. This is not an easy stile; but is it not the stile of Shakspeare? JOHNSON.

P. 125, l. 32. *And many such like as's of great charge,* *Asset heavily loaded.* A quibble is intended between *as* the conditional particle, and *ass* the beast of burthen. That *charg'd* anciently signified *loaded*, may be proved from the following passage in *The Widow's Tears*; by Chapman, 1612:

"Thou must be the *ass charg'd with crowns* to make way."

JOHNSON.

Shakspeare has so many quibbles of his own to answer for; that there are those who think it hard he should be charged with others which perhaps he never thought of. STREVENA.

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Though the first and obvious meaning of these words certainly is, "*many similar adjurations, or monitory injunctions, of great weight and importance,*" yet Dr. Johnson's notion of a quibble being also in the poet's thoughts, is supported by two other passages of Shakspeare, in which *asses* are introduced as usually employed in the carriage of gold, a *charge* of no small weight:

"He shall but bear them, as the *ass*
bears gold,
 "To groan and sweat under the business."

Julius Caesar.

In further support of his observation, it should be remembered, that the letter *s* in the particle *as* in the midland counties is usually pronounced hard, *s* in the pronoun *us*. Dr. Johnson himself asways pronounced the particle *as* hard, and so I have no doubt did Shakspeare. It is so pronounced in Warwickshire at this day. The first folio accordingly has—*assis*. MALONE.

P. 125, last l. *Not shriving-time allow'd.*] *v.* without time for confession of their sins: other proof of Hamlet's christian-like disposition.

STEEVENS.

. 126, l. 3. 4. *I had my father's signet in my purse,*

Which was the model of that Danish seal:] *model* is in old language the *copy*. The signet was formed in imitation of the Danish seal.

MALONE.

126, l. 8. *A changeling* is a *child* which *fairies* are supposed to leave in the room at which they steal. JOHNSON.

126, l. 14. 15. — — — — — their defect
as by their own insinuation grow] In—

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sinuation, for corruptly obtruding them into his service. WARBURTON.

By their having insinuated or thrust them into the employment. MALONE.

P. 126, l. 20. — *think thee,*] i. e. b thee. MALONE.

P. 126, l. 25. An *angle* in Shakspeare's signified a fishing-rod. MALONE.

P. 126, l. 27. *To quit him*] To requite to pay him his due. JOHNSON.

P. 127, l. 3. — *I'll count his favours:*] the folio. Mr. Rowe first made the alteration which is perhaps unnecessary. *I'll count* I yours may mean, — *I will make account* them, i. e. *reckon upon them, value them.*

STEE

What favours has Hamlet received from thee, that he was to make account of? — I doubt but we should read,

— *I'll court his favour.* M. M.

Mr. Rowe for *count* very plausibly *court.* MALONE.

Hamlet may refer to former civilities of L and weigh them against his late intemperate behaviour; or may *count* on such kindness expected to receive in consequence of a mere reconciliation. STEEVENS.

P. 127, l. 11. A *water-fly* skips up and upon the surface of the water, without any rent purpose of reason, and is thence the emblem of a busy trifler. JOHNSON.

Water-fly is in *Travels and Crossings* a term of reproach, for contemptible *frivolousness* of size. "How (says Thomson) the world is pestered with such water-flies: *it* *lives of nature.*" .. *Water-flies* are good

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in Chaucer denotes a thing of no value. *Can-
ny Tales*, v. 17203, Mr. Tyrwhitt's edition :

"Not worth to thee as in comparison

"*The mountance [value] of a gnat.*"

HOLT WHITE.

27, l. 16. — *a chough*;] A kind of jack-
JOHNSON.

27, l. 28. Ham. *But yet, methinks, it is
ultry and hot*; &c.] Hamlet is here playing
he same farce with Osrick, which he had
rily done with Polonius. STEEVENS.

28, first l. — *remember* —] "*Remember
our courtesy*," I believe, Hamlet would have
f he had not been interrupted. "*Remember
urtesy*," he could not possibly have said.

MALONE.

28, l. 3. — *for my ease, in good faith.*]
seems to have been the affected phrase of the

Thus, in Marston's *Malcontent*, 1604: "*I
h you, Sir, be covered. — No, in good faith
y ease.*" And in other places. FARMER.

appears to have been the common language
emony in our author's time. "*Why do you
bareheaded?*" (says one of the speakers in
's *SECOND FRUTES*, 1591.) *you do yourself*
Pardon me, good Sir, (replies his friend;)
for my ease." MALONE.

28, l. 5. 6. — *full of most excellent dif-
ces,*] Full of *distinguishing excellencies*,

JOHNSON.

28, l. 8. — *he is the card or calendar of
v,*] The general preceptor of elegance; the
by which a gentleman is to direct his course;
alendar by which he is to choose his time.
hat he does may be both excellent and sea-
JOHNSON.

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P. 128, l. 8-10. — *you shall find in him continent of what part a gentleman would s*
You shall find him containing and comprising every quality which a gentleman would desire contemplate for imitation. I know not but should he read, *You shall find him the continent.* JOHNSON.

P. 128, l. 11-15. — *his definement suff no perdition in you; — though, I know, divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and yet but raw neith in respect of his quick sail.*] This is designed as a specimen, and ridicule of the court-jar amongst the *precieux* of that time. The sense English is, "Sir, he suffers nothing in your account of him, though to enumerate his good qualities particularly would be endless; yet when we have done our best, it would still come short of him. However, in strictness of truth, he is a great genius, and of a character so rarely to be met with that to find any thing like him we must look in his mirror, and his imitators will appear none but his shadows." WARBURTON.

Instead of *raw* we should read — *slow*.

WARBURN

I believe *raw* to be the right word; it is a word of great latitude; *raw* signifies *unripe, immature, thence unformed, imperfect, unskilful*. The account of him would be *imperfect*, in respect of his quick sail. The phrase *quick sail* was, I suppose, a proverbial term for *activity of mind*.

JOHN

P. 128, l. 16. — *a soul of great article:]* This is obscure. I once thought it might have been *soul of great altitude*; but, I suppose, a *so great article*, means a soul of large compass.

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sion, of many contents; the particulars of an inventory are called *articles*. JOHNSON.

P. 128, l. 16. 17. — and his infusion of such dearth —] *Dearth* is dearness, value, price. And his internal qualities of such value and rarity.

P. 128, l. 25. 26. *Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, Sir, really.*] Of this interrogatory remark the sense is very obscure. The question may mean, *Might not all this be understood in plainer language?* But then, *you will do it, Sir, really*, seems to have no use, for who could doubt but plain language would be intelligible? I would therefore read, *Is't possible not to be understood in a mother tongue? You will do it, Sir, really.*

Suppose we were to point the passage thus: "Is't not possible to understand? In another tongue you will do it, Sir, really."

The speech seems to be addressed to *Osrick*, who is puzzled by Hamlet's imitation of his own affected language. STEEVENS.

Theobald has silently substituted *rarely* for *ally*. I think Horatio's speech is addressed to Hamlet. *Another tongue* does not mean as I conceive, *plainer language*, (as Dr. Johnson supposed) but "language so fantastical and affected as the appearance of a *foreign tongue*:" and the following words Horatio, I think, means to raise Hamlet for imitating this kind of babble happily. I suspect, however, that the poet meant — *Is't possible not to understand in a mother tongue?*

As this note was written, I have found the very error in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*.

not much approve me;] If you know ignorant, your esteem would not raise my reputation. *To approve, is to reap approbation.* JOHNSON.

P. 129, l. 3-5. *I dare not confess I should compare with him in excellence to know a man well, were to know I dare not pretend to know him, lest I pretend to an equality: no man can compare another, but by knowing himself, wutmost extent of human wisdom.* JOHN

P. 129, l. 7. — *in his need.* —] Silence. JOHNSON.

P. 129, l. 14. — against the which *pawn'd,*] — Thus the quarto, 1604. reads — *impon'd.* *Pignare* in Italian signifies to *pawn*, and to lay a wager. MALONE

Perhaps it should be, *depon'd.* So,
“I would upon this cause de

before me. It is of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and had belonged to the Somerset family. STEEVENS.

The word *hangers* has been misunderstood. That part of the girdle or belt by which the sword was suspended, was in our poet's time called *the hangers*. See Minshew's Dictionary, 2617: "*The hangers of a sword. G. Pendants d'espée, L. Subcingulum,*" &c. So, in an inventory found among the papers of Hamlet Clarke, an attorney of a court of record in London in the year 1611, and printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVIII. p. 111:

"*Item, One payre of girdle and hangers, of silver purle, and cullored silke.*

"*Item, One payre of girdler and hangers, upon white sattene.*"

The hangers ran in an oblique direction from the middle of the forepart of the girdle across the left thigh, and were attached to the girdle behind.

MALONE.

P. 129, l. 20. — you must be edified by the *margent*,] Dr. Warburton very properly observes, that in the old books the gloss or comment was usually printed on the *margent* of the leaf.

STEEVENS.

P. 129, l. 23. — more german —] *More-a-kin.*

JOHNSON.

P. 129, l. 30-33. *The King, Sir, hath lay'd, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three-hits; he hath laid, on twelve for nine;*] This wager I do not understand. In a dozen passes one must exceed the other more or less than three hits. Not can I comprehend, how, in a dozen, there can be twelve nine. The passage is of no importance; it is

sufficient that there was a wager. The quarto has the passage as it stands. The folio, — *He hath one twelve for mine.* JOHNSON.

As three or four complete pages would scarcely hold the remarks already printed, together with those which have lately been communicated to me in MSS. on this very unimportant passage, I shall avoid both partiality and tediousness, by the omission of them all—I therefore leave the conditions of this wager to be adjusted by the members of Brookes's, or the Jockey-Club at Newmarket, who on such subjects may prove the most enlightened commentators, and most successfully bestir themselves in the cold unpoetick dabble of calculation.

STEVENS.

P. 130, l. 17. 18. *This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.*] I see no particular propriety in the image of the lapwing. Osrick did not run till he had done his business. We may read, — *This lapwing ran away* — That is, *this fellow was full of unimportant bustle from his birth.* JOHNSON.

I believe, Hamlet means to say that Osrick is bustling and impetuous, and yet "but raw in respect of his quick sail." MALONE.

P. 130, l. 19. *He did comply with his dug,]* For *comply*. Dr. Warburton and the subsequent editors; read — *compliment*. The verb *to compliment* was not used, as I think, in the time of Shakspeare. MALONE.

I doubt whether any alteration be necessary. Shakspeare seems to have used *comply* in the sense in which we use the verb *compliment*. See before, Act II. sc. ii: "— let me comply with you in this garb." TYRWHITT.

P. 130, l. 20. 21. — and many more of the

breed,] The first folio has — *and mine more*
he same bevy. The second folio — *and nine*
, &c. Perhaps the last is the true reading.

STEEVENS.

There may be a propriety in *bevy*, as he has
 called him a *lapwing*. TOLLET.

Many more of the same breed," is the reading
 in quarto, 1604. MALONE.

150, l. 22. 23. *Outward habit of encoun-*
er is exterior politeness of address; in allusion
 to Trinculo's last speech. HENLEY.

150, l. 20-25. *Thus has he* (and many
 of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy
 does on,) *only got the tune of the time,*
outward habit of encounter; a kind of
collection, which carries them through
through the most fond and winnow'd opi-
ions:] This passage in the quarto stands thus:
 They have got out of the habit of encounter,
 and of misty collection, which carries them
 high and through the most profane and tren-
 chanted opinions." If this printer preserved any
 of the original, our author wrote, "the most
 and renowned opinions," which is better than
 'd and winnow'd.

The meaning is, "these men have got the cant
 of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and
 airy conversation, a kind of frothy collection
 of fashionable prattle, which yet carries them
 high through the most select and approving judgements.
 The airy facility of talk sometimes imposes upon
 men."

Who has not seen this observation verified?

JOHNSON.

and is evidently opposed to winnow'd. Fond,
 the language of Shakspeare's age, signified foolish.

HAMLET,

examined. The sensu-
ion was yet success-
able not only with the
under judgement. The
is visible in the reading.
Profane or vulgar
r thrice renowned.

STEEVENS.
seems right to me. Both
d drest, occur together
sbandman, p. 117.

TOLLET.
age, it always appeared
read, "the most sound
and I have been con-
y a passage I lately met
here speaking of a man
says, "Besides he may
oice of his authors, and
hand either in weighing
st opinions," Book III.

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131, l. 17. *Gain-giving*] is the same as *giving*. STEEVENS.

131, l. 18. *If your mind dislike any thing, it:]* With these pressages of future evils in the mind, the poet has fore-run many which are to happen at the conclusions of plays; and sometimes so particularly, that the circumstances of calamity are minutely d at, as in the instance Juliet, who tells her from the window, that he appears *like one in the bottom of a tomb*. The supposition the genius of the mind gave an alarm before reaching dissolution, is a very ancient one, and ap can never be totally driven out; yet it he allowed the merit of adding beauty to y, however injurious it may sometimes prove e weak and the superstitious. STEEVENS.

131, l. 25. 26. — *since no man, of aught waves, knows, what is't to leave betimes? be.]* The old quarto reads, — *Since no man ught he leaves, knows, what is't to leave nes? Let be*. This is the true reading. Here premises conclude right, and the argument n out at length is to this effect: "It is true, by death, we lose all the goods of life; yet g this loss is no otherwise an evil than as we sensible of it, and since death removes all of it, what matters it how soon we lose .? Therefore come what will, I am prepa-
WARBURTON.

he reading of the quarto was right, but in some r copy the harshness of the transposition was ned, and the passage stood thus: — *Since nan knows aught of what he leaves*. For us was printed in the later copies has, by a t blunder in such typographers.

I do not think Dr. Warburton's interpretation of the passage the best that it will admit; meaning may be this, — Since *no man ought of* the state of life which *he leaves* he cannot judge what other years may bring; why should he be afraid of *leaving* life? Why should he dread an early death; or cannot tell whether it is an exclusion of life or an interception of calamity? I despise divination of augury and omens, which has no ground in reason or piety; my comfort is, that I shall fall but by the direction of Providence.

Sir T. Hamner has, — *Since no man can conjecture not very reprehensible. no man can call any possession certain, to leave?* JOHNSON.

Dr. Warburton has truly stated the sense of the first quarto, 1604. The folio reads *no man has ought of what he leaves, to leave betimes?*

In the late editions neither copy has been allowed. MALONE.

P. 131, 1st l. Ham. *Give me you*
Sir: I have done you
 I wish Hamlet had made some other declaration; this is unsuitable to the character of a good man, to shelter himself in falsehood. JOHNSON.

P. 132, l. 20. *I am satisfied in nature*
 was a piece of satire on fantastical-honour; *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of men of the sword, whether *artificial* honour is to be contended with Hamlet's submission.

P. 132, l. 23-26. — and will no
 ment,

Till by some older masters, of k

*I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd :*] This is said in
sion to an English custom. I learn from an
ent MS. of which the reader will find a more
icular account in a note to *The Merry Wives
 Windsor*, that in Queen Elizabeth's time there
s "four ancient masters of defence," in the
of London. They appear to have been the
rees in many affairs of honour, and exacted
ate from all inferior practitioners of the art of
ing, &c. STEEVENS.

ur poet frequently alludes to English customs,
may have done so here, but I do not believe
gentlemen ever submitted points of honour to
ons who exhibited themselves for money as
e-fighters on the publick stage; though they
ht appeal in certain cases to Raleigh, Essex, or
thampton, who from their high rank, their
se of life, and established reputation, might
strict propriety be styled, "elder masters, of
wn honour." MALONE.

. 133, l. 7. *Your Grace hath laid the odds
o'the weaker side.*]

en the odds were on the side of Laertes, who
to hit Hamlet twelve times to nine, it was
aps the author's slip. Sir T. Hanmer reads—

*Your Grace hath laid upon the weaker
side.* JOHNSON.

see no reason for altering this passage. Hamlet
siders the things *impon'd* by the King, as of
re value than those *impon'd* by Laertes; and
efore says, "that he had laid odds on the weak-
side." M. MASON.

Hamlet either means, that what the King had
was more valuable than what Laertes staked;
hat *the King hath made his bet*, an advan-

age being given to the winner per the first is the true interpretation: line but one the word odds certain advantage given to the party, but have a different sense. This it not a panacea with our poet. MALONE.

The King had wagered, on Hamlet's horses, against a few rapiers, that is, about twenty to one. These were meant. RITSON.

P. 133, l. 9. — we have therefore odds were twelve to nine in favor by Laertes giving him three. RITSON.

P. 133, l. 14. Set me the stoupe that tab is a kind of flaggon. STREEVENS.

Containing somewhat more than 1

Stoup is a common word in Scotland, and denotes a pewter vessel, or wine measure; but of no determination that being ascertained by an adjunct *stoup*, *pint-stoup*, *mutchkin-stoup*, vessel in which they fetch or keep called the *water-stoup*. A *stoup* therefore equivalent to a pitcher of

P. 133, l. 20. And in the cup as he thron editions,

And in the cup an onyx and This is a various reading in several copies; but union seems to me the word. If I am not mistaken, neither sardonix, are jewels which even an imperial crown. An union sort of pearl, and has its place

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opponents. Besides, let us consider what the says on Hamlet's giving Laertes the first bit:

"Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this
pearl is thine;

"Here's to thy health."

fore, if an *union* be a *pearl*, and an *onyx* is, or stone, quite differing in its nature from the King saying, that Hamlet has earn'd *pearl*, I think, amounts to a demonstration it was an *union* pearl, which he meant to into the cup. TROBOLD.

in the folio rightly. In the first quarto by relessness of the printer, for *union*, we have, which in the subsequent quarto copies was *onyx*. An *union* is a very precious pearl.

MALONE.

swallow a *pearl* in a draught seems to have equally common to royal and mercantile gality. So, in the Second Part of *If you not Me, you know Nobody*, 1606, Sir as Gresham says:

"Here 16,000 pound at one clap goes.

"Instead of sugar, Gresham *drinks this*
pearls

"Unto his Queen and mistress."

may be observed, however, that *pearls* were sed to possess an exhilarating quality.

STEEVENS.

34, first l. — *Hamlet, this pearl is thine;*] pretence of throwing a *pearl* into the cup, ing may be supposed to drop some poison-rug into the wine. Hamlet seems to suspect then he afterwards discovers the effects of the, and tauntingly asks him, — "Is the *union*"

STEEVENS.

34, l. 9. He's fat, and scant of breath.]

It seems that *John Lowin*, who was the original *Falstaff*, was no less celebrated for his performance of *Henry VIII.* and *Hamlet*. See the *Historia Histrionica*, &c. If he was adapted, by the corpulence of his figure, to appear with propriety in the two former of these characters, Shakspeare might have put this observation into the mouth of her Majesty, to apologize for the want of such elegance of person as an audience might expect to meet with in the representative of the youthful Prince of Denmark, whom Ophelia speaks of as "the glass of fashion and the mould of form." This, however, is mere conjecture; as *Joseph Taylor* likewise acted *Hamlet* during the life of Shakspeare. STEEVENS.

The author of *Historia Histrionica*, and Downes the Prompter, concur in saying, that Taylor was the performer of Hamlet. Roberts the player alone has asserted, (apparently without any authority,) that this part was performed by Lowin. MALONE.

P. 134, l. 11. *The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.*] i. e. (in humbler language) drinks good luck to you.

STEEVENS.

P. 134, l. 19. *Come, let me wipe thy face.*] These very words (the present repetition of which might have been spared) are addressed by Doll Tearsheet to Falstaff, when he was heated by his pursuit of Pistol. STEEVENS.

P. 134, l. 27. *I am afeard, you make a wanton of me.*] A wanton was a man feeble and effeminate. JOHNSON.

Rather, you trifle with me as if you were playing with a child. RITSON.

A passage in *King John* shows that wanton

Here means a man feeble and effeminate, as Dr. Johnson has explained it. MALONE.

P. 135, l. 31. *Drink off this potion: — Is the union here?*] Thus the folio. In a former passage in the quarto, 1604, for *union* we had *unice*; here it has *onyx*.

It should seem from this line, and Laertes's next speech, that Hamlet here forces the expiring King to drink some of the poisoned cup, and that he dies while it is at his lips. MALONE.

P. 136, l. 6. *That are but mutes or audience to this act,*] That are either mere *auditors* of this catastrophe, or at most only *mute performers*, that fill the stage without any part in the action. JOHNSON.

P. 136, l. 7. A *sergeant* is a bailiff or sheriff's officer. RITSON.

P. 136, l. 32. *The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirits;*] Alluding, I suppose, to a victorious cock exulting over his conquered antagonist. STEEVENS.

This word, [*o'er-crows*] for which Mr. Pope and succeeding editors have substituted *over-grows*, is used by Holinshed in his *History of Ireland*: "These noblemen laboured with tooth and nayle to *over-crowe*, and consequently to overthrow, one another." MALONE.

The accepted reading is the more quaint, the rejected one, the more elegant of the two.

STEEVENS.

P. 136, last l. — with the *occurrents*,] i. e. incidents. The word is now disused. STEEVENS.

P. 137, first l. *Which have solicited,*] *Solicited*, for brought on the event. WARBURTON.

Warburton says that *solicited*, means brought in the event; but that is a meaning the word

cannot import. That have *solicited*, means that have *excited*; — but the sentence is left imperfect. M. MASON.

What Hamlet would have said, the poet has not given us any ground for conjecturing. The words seem to mean no more than — *which have incited me to* —. MALONE.

P. 137, l. 4. *And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!*] The concluding words of the unfortunate Lord Essex's praying on the scaffold were these: "— and when my life and body shall part, send *thy blessed angels*, which may receive my soule, and convey it to the joys of heaven."

Hamlet had certainly been exhibited before the execution of that amiable nobleman; but the words here given to Horatio might have been one of the many additions made to this play. As no copy of an earlier date than 1604 has yet been discovered, whether Lord Essex's last words were in our author's thoughts, cannot now be ascertained.

MALONE.

Let us review for a moment the behaviour of Hamlet, on the strength of which Horatio found his eulogy, and recommends him to the patronage of angels.

Hamlet, at the command of his father's ghost, undertakes with seeming alacrity to revenge the murder; and declares he will banish all other thoughts from his mind. He makes, however, but one effort to keep his word, and that is, when he mistakes Polonius for the King. On another occasion, he defers his purpose till he can find an opportunity of taking his uncle when he is least prepared for death, that he may insure damnation to his soul. Though he assassinated Polonius by

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accident, yet he deliberately procures the execution of his school-fellows, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who appear not, from any circumstances in this play, to have been acquainted with the treacherous purposes of the mandate they were employed to carry. To embitter their fate, and hazard their punishment beyond the grave, he denies them even the few moments necessary for a brief confession of their sins. Their end (as he declares in a subsequent conversation with Horatio) gives him no concern, for they obtruded themselves into the service, and he thought he had a right to destroy them. From his brutal conduct toward Ophelia, he is not less accountable for her distraction and death. He interrupts the funeral designed in honour of this lady, at which both the King and Queen were present; and, by such an outrage to decency, renders it still more necessary for the usurper to lay a second stratagem for his life, though the first had proved abortive. He insults the brother of the dead, and boasts of an affection for his sister, which, before, he had denied to her face; and yet at this very time must be considered as desirous of supporting the character of a madman, so that the openness of his confession is not to be imputed to him as a virtue. He apologizes to Horatio afterwards for the absurdity of this behaviour, to which, he says, he was provoked by that nobleness of fraternal grief, which, indeed, he ought rather to have applauded than condemned. Dr. Johnson has observed, that to bring about a reconciliation with Laertes, he has availed himself of a dishonest fallacy; and to conclude, it is obvious to the most careless spectator or reader, that he kills the King at last to revenge himself, and not his father.

Hamlet cannot be said to have pursued his end by very warrantable means; and if the poet, who he sacrificed him at last, meant to have enforced such a moral, it is not the worst that can be deduced from the play; for, as *Maximus*, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Valentinian*, says,

"Although his justice were as white as
truth,

"His way was crooked to it; that con-
demns him."

The late Dr. Akenside once observed to me that the conduct of Hamlet was every way unnatural and indefensible, unless he were to be regarded as a young man whose intellects were, in some degree, impaired by his own misfortune by the death of his father, the loss of expected sovereignty, and a sense of shame resulting from the hasty and incestuous marriage of his mother.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because Hamlet seems to have been hitherto regarded as a hero not undeserving the pity of the audience; and because no writer on Shakspeare has taken the pains to point out the immorality and tendency of his character. STEEVENS.

Mr. Ritson controverts the justice of Mr. Steevens's strictures on the character of Hamlet, which he undertakes to defend. The arguments he makes use of for this purpose are too long to be here inserted, and therefore I shall content myself with referring to them: See REMARKS, p. 217, to 221.

REXI

Some of the charges here brought against Hamlet appear to me questionable at least, if not unfounded. I have already observed that in the novel on which this play is constructed, the ministers who by the King's order accompa-

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young Prince, to England, and carried with a packet in which his death was concealed, were apprized of its contents; and therefore we may *presume* that Shakspeare meant to impute their representatives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as equally criminal; as combining the King to deprive Hamlet of his life. His using their execution therefore does not with any appearance to have been an unprovoked cruelty, and *might* have been considered by him as necessary to his *future safety*; knowing, as he must have known, that they had devoted themselves to the service of the King in whatever he should demand. The principle on which he acted, is sustained by the following lines, from which it may be inferred that the poet meant to represent Hamlet's school-fellows as privy to the conspiracy against his life:

"There's letters seal'd: and my two school-fellows —

"Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,

"They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,

"And marshall me to knavery: Let it work;

"For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer

"Hoist with his own petar; and it shall go hard,

"But I will delve one yard below *their* mines,

"*And blow them to the moon.*"

Another charge is, that "*he comes*") to disturb

the funeral of Ophelia:" but the fact is otherwise represented in the first scene of the fifth act: for when the funeral procession appears, (which he does not seek, but finds,) he exclaims,

"The Queen, the courtiers: *who is this they follow,*

"And with such maimed rites?"

nor does he know it to be the funeral of Ophelia, till Laertes mentions that the dead body was that of his sister.

I do not perceive that he is accountable for the madness of Ophelia. He did not mean to kill her father when concealed behind the arras, but the King; and still less did he intend to deprive her of her reason and her life: her subsequent distraction therefore can no otherwise be laid to his charge, than as an unforeseen consequence from his too ardently pursuing the object recommended to him by his father.

He appears to have been induced to leap into Ophelia's grave, not with a design to insult Laertes, but from his love to her, (which then he had no reason to conceal,) and from the *bravery of her brother's grief*, which excited him (not to condemn that brother, as has been stated, but) to *vie with him* in the expression of affection and sorrow:

"Why, I will fight with him upon this theme;

"Until my eyelids will no longer wag.—

"I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers

"Could not with all their quantity of love

"Make up my sum."

When Hamlet says, "the *bravery of his grief* did put me into a towering passion," I think

he means, into a lofty expression (not of *resentment*, but) of *sorrow*.

I may also add, that he neither assaulted, nor insulted Laertes, till that nobleman had cursed him, and seized him by the throat. MALONE.

P. 137, l. 11. *This quarry cries on havock!*
Sir T. Hamner reads,

——— *cries out, havock!*

To *cry on*, was to *exclaim against*. I suppose, when unfair sportsmen destroyed more *quarry* or *game* than was reasonable, the censure was to cry, *Havock*. JOHNSON.

We have the same phraseology in *Othello*, Act V. sc. i:

“—Whose noise is this, that *cries on* murder?”

See the note there. MALONE.

P. 137, l. 11-13. — O proud death!

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,] Shakspeare has already employed this allusion to the *Choae*, or *feasts of the dead*, which were anciently celebrated at Athens, and are mentioned by Plutarch in the life of *Antoni*us. STEEVENS.

P. 137, l. 22. *Not from his mouth,*] i. e. the King's. STEEVENS.

P. 137, l. 31. *Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;*] *Carnal* is a word used by Shakspeare as an adjective to *carnage*. RITSON.

Of sanguinary and unnatural acts, to which the perpetrator was instigated by concupiscence, or, to use our poet's own words, by “*carnal stings*.” The speaker alludes to the murder of old Hamlet by his brother, previous to his incestuous union with Gertrude. A Remarker asks, “was the re-
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lationship between the usurper and the deceased King a secret confined to Horatio?" — No, but the *murder* of Hamlet by Claudius was a secret which the young Prince had imparted to Horatio, and had imparted to him alone; and to this it is he principally, though covertly, alludes. — *Carnal* is the reading of the only authentick copies, the quarto 1604, and the folio 1623. The modern editors, following a quarto of no authority, for *carnal*, read *cruel*. MALONE.

The edition immediately preceding that of Mr. Malone, reads — *carnal*, and not *cruel*, as here asserted. REED.

P. 137, last but one l. — *put on* —] i. e. instigated, produced. MALONE.

P. 138, l. 6. — *some rights of memory in this kingdom,*] Some rights, which are remembered in this kingdom.

MALONE.

P. 138. l. 9. 10. *And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more :*] *No* is the reading of the old quartos, but certainly a mistaken one. We say, *a man will no more draw breath*: but that a man's *voice will draw no more*; is, I believe, an expression without any authority. I choose to espouse the reading of the elder folio:

And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more.

And this is the poet's meaning. Hamlet, just before his death, had said:

"But I do prophecy, the election lights
"On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
"So tell him," &c.

Accordingly, Horatio here delivers that message, and very justly infers, that Hamlet's voice will

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be seconded by others, and procure them in favour of Fortinbras's succession. THEOBALD.

If the dramas of Shakspeare were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity; with merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations: and solemnity not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet caused much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first act chills the blood with horror, to the fop in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the madman most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the King, he

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snakes no attempt to punish him; and his is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced: the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient necessity, than a stroke of art. A scheme is easily formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger and Laertes with the bowl.

The poet is accused of having shown little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with a neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; revenge which he demands is not obtained, but the death of him that was required to take it; the gratification, which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, beautiful, the harmless, and the pious. JOHN

The levity of behaviour which Hamlet assumes immediately after the disappearance of the ghost in the first act, [sc. v.] has been objected to; the writer of some sensible Remarks on this tragedy, published in 1736, justly observes, that the poet's object there was, that Marcellus "might imagine that the ghost had revealed to Hamlet a matter of great consequence to him, and that he might not therefore be suspected of any deep sign."

"I have heard (adds the same writer,) many persons wonder, why the poet should bring in the ghost in complete armour. — I think these reasons may be given for it. We are to consider that he could introduce him in these dresses or in his regal dress, in a habit of interment, in common habit, or in some fantastick use of his own invention. Now let us examine, what

most likely to affect the spectators with passions proper on the occasion. —

“The regal habit has nothing uncommon in it, nor surprising; nor could it give rise to any fine images. The habit of interment was something too horrible; for terror, not horror, is to be raised in the spectators. The common habit (or *habit de ville*, as the French call it,) was by no means proper for the occasion. It remains then that the poet should choose some habit from his own brain: but this certainly could not be proper, because invention in such a case would be so much in danger of falling into the grotesque, that it was not to be hazarded.

“Now as to the armour, it was very suitable to a King who is described as a great warrior, and is very particular; and consequently affects the spectators without being fantastick. —

“The King spurs on his son to revenge his foul and unnatural murder, from these two considerations chiefly; that he was sent into the other world without having had time to repent of his sins, and without the necessary sacraments, according to the church of Rome, and that consequently his soul was to suffer, if not eternal damnation, at least a long course of penance in purgatory; which aggravates the circumstances of his brother's barbarity; and secondly, that Denmark might not be the scene of usurpation and incest, and the throne thus polluted and profaned. For these reasons he prompts the young Prince to revenge; else it would have been more becoming the character of such a Prince as Hamlet's father is represented to have been, and more suitable to his present condition, to have left his brother to the divine punishment, and to

1 HAMLET,

e for his base crime, which
must be deprived of
ground-work of his plot,
young Prince feign himself
his to be injudicious; for so
lf from any violence which
per, it seems to have been
f getting himself confined,
red from an opportunity
death, which now seemed
accordingly it was the oc-
t away to England; which
ct upon his life, he never
father's murder. To speak
ng too close to the ground-
fallen into an absurdity;
son at all in nature, why
ot put the usurper to death
cially as Hamlet is repre-
ive, and so careless of his

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to suppose that, like *Chimene*, in the *Cid*, great sorrow proceeded from her father's being killed by the man she loved, and thereby making decent for her ever to marry him.

Laertes's character is very odd one; it is not to say whether it is good or bad: but his coming to the villainous contrivance of the usurper to murder Hamlet, makes him much more odd man than a good one. — It is a very nice tact in the poet to make the usurper build his scheme upon the generous unsuspecting temper of a person he intends to murder, and thus to raise Prince's character by the confession of his enemy to make the villain ten times more odious in his own mouth. The contrivance of the foil used, (i. e. without a button,) is methinks too much a deceit to go down even with a man of the most unsuspecting nature.

Laertes's death and the Queen's are truly poetical justice, and very naturally brought about, though I do not conceive it so easy to change persons in a scuffle without knowing it at the time. The death of the Queen is particularly according to the strictest rules of poetical justice; for she lost her life by the villainy of the very person, who had been the cause of all her crimes.

Since the poet deferred so long the usurper's death, we must own that he has very naturally expediently added fresh crimes to those the usurper had already committed.

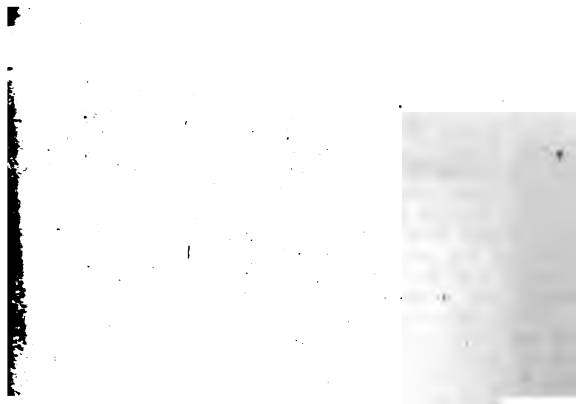
Upon Laertes's repentance for contriving the death of Hamlet, one cannot but feel some sentiments of pity for him; but who can see or read the death of the young Prince without melting into grief and compassion? Horatio's earnest desire to die with the Prince, thus not to survive his friend,

HAMLET,

his friendship for Hamlet
occasion, than many ac-
possibly have done. And
draw his breath in this
er, to clear his reputa-
uocence, is very suitable
, and the honest regard
ve not to be misrepre-
they may not set a bad
ly they have set a good
otive that can, in reason,
me and glory.

aving the bodies carried
ell imagined, and was
the request of his de-
ts in this, and in all
manly honest character,
throughout the piece.
content to the audience,
(which must be Ham-
life; yet the greatest
, which can be in this
his memory.

y naturally at the close
very just claim to the
had the dying voice of
words gives a noble
serves to carry off the
age with the honours
" MALONE.















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